





**THE MINISTER
AND HIS PARISH**



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THE MINISTER AND HIS PARISH

*A Discussion of Problems in
Church Administration*

BY

HENRY WILDER FOOTE, A.M., S.T.B.

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To
MY WIFE

PREFACE

This book is intended for laymen who are engaged in church administration as much as it is for ministers, for the problems discussed concern both in almost equal degree, since they involve a dual relationship,—that of the minister to his parish and of the parish to its minister. It would be as impossible to write a book on this subject for the minister alone, or for church trustees alone, as to write a book on physiology which should discuss the functions of the head without any reference to the body, or those of the body without any reference to the head. In church administration the minister is the directing head, the parish is the functioning body. The book deals primarily with this intimate relationship and its inherent duties and obligations.

It is based in large part upon a series of lectures delivered to several successive classes of theological students at the Harvard Divinity School, in part also upon observations made in the course of a rather unusually varied professional experience. Even in childhood I was familiar with the atmosphere of parish life, for I had the happiness to be reared by parents who discharged with consummate skill and devotion the duties which fall to a minister and his wife. I have myself served as minister of two parish churches, one in the South and one in the Middle West; as a denominational administrative officer in a position which brought before me the practical problems of churches in many differing localities; as a teacher of preaching and parish administration in a theological school for nearly a decade; and as the Junior Warden,—equivalent to secretary of the Board of Trustees,—of an important city church. I have, therefore, studied from several angles the problems discussed in the following pages, and am as

familiar with the point of view of the layman as of the minister.

Nevertheless I should not have felt justified in adding to the world's burden of books were I acquainted with any other volume dealing comprehensively with the topics hereinafter discussed. There is a plethora of books on preaching, there are many on pastoral care, but there are very few on parish administration as it is conducted in Protestant churches. The most widely known book on the subject—"Parish Problems," edited by Washington Glad-den, is more than thirty-five years old, and, while it is excellent at many points, it is defective or out of date at others. DeWitt's "Decently and in Order," published in 1914, deals briefly with some of the points considered in this book, but much of it is applicable only to the usage of the Protestant Episcopal Church. There are also three recent English books touching upon some parts of this field, namely Rogers' "Principles of Parish Work," Green's "The Town Parson," and Keatinge's "The Priest, his Work and Character." All these, however, deal with conditions in Great Britain; the first and second from the Anglican point of view, the third from the Roman Catholic. Keatinge's book is particularly to be recommended to Protestants who are interested in a picture of the Roman priesthood at its best. Two other notable books are "The Administration of an Institutional Church," by Hodges and Reichert,—a detailed account of the administration of St. George's Church, New York, as developed under the leadership of Dr. Rainsford, and "The Work of a Great Parish," edited by Garbett, an account of a parish church in Portsea, England. Both these books contain much of value to every minister and church officer, but the former is expensive, and the second not easily accessible, and both describe methods used in large, rich and highly organized city churches under conditions which are very different from those of most parishes.

The Roman Catholic Church, with its many centuries of experience, has developed a highly elaborated system of canon law, and is governed by a hierarchy empowered to

deal promptly and efficiently with the problems of parish and diocesan administration. The Protestant Episcopal Church in this country, backed by the traditions of the Church of England, which in turn drew heavily upon the Church of Rome, has also its body of canon law. These highly organized branches of the Christian Church are, therefore, more efficiently administered, but also tend to become somewhat rigid and inflexible, and, of necessity, are more autocratic in control than the free churches. Most Protestant churches, on the other hand, are loosely, often carelessly administered, without an authoritative body of canon law, but following a more or less recognized set of traditions and customs. These free churches pay with their inefficiency the usual price for freedom and democracy. They are subject to mismanagement, and to dissensions, often over trivial matters, which in many cases might be avoided by foresight and an understanding of very simple rules of procedure. The helplessness of many parish committees is due to lack of guidance, to ignorance as to where to turn for information and advice. Sometimes their ministers are almost equally ignorant as to their legal rights and obligations, and often they have had quite inadequate training in ways of dealing with the practical problems of parish administration. It is to meet the needs of these parishes and their ministers that this book is written, in the hope that it may help them to avoid some of the common pitfalls of church life.

There are some parish problems upon which I have touched but lightly. I have not attempted any discussion of the canon law, either of the Roman Catholic or of the Protestant Episcopal churches. Canon law is a highly specialized field about which I know little, and which does not concern the great majority of ministers or church officers into whose hands this book is likely to come. I have not attempted to discuss the civil church law of the several states of the American Union,—also a large and difficult field,—but have contented myself with setting forth the law as related to the minister at certain particular points, drawing most of my information from Zollman's book,

“American Civil Church Law,” the only treatise on this difficult subject which has come under my notice, although Hall and Brooke’s “American Marriage Laws” also deals with one especial phase of this subject. In matters of church art and architecture I have dealt only with certain essential points to be borne in mind, for there is an abundant literature on the subject, including many short manuals on modern church architecture, for the most part thoroughly bad. I have not attempted to deal with problems of Sunday-School management, or with the larger field of religious education, or work with young people, both because these matters properly come under the head of pastoral care, a subject outside the scope of this book, and because there is already a large body of modern literature dealing with them. In the same way I have passed over the problems connected with the conduct of worship, an important field for the minister, but one which would require an entire volume for any adequate discussion. This book is definitely limited to the discussion of the legal, financial, business and administrative problems of the church.

In writing of the technique of, and the machinery for administering a parish, I have not forgotten Ezekiel’s great vision of the wheels. I am well aware that machinery alone, no matter how perfect, cannot bring in the kingdom of God, but that the living spirit must be in the wheels if they are to be lifted up from the earth and made to go. But good organization and effective administration mean lessened wear and tear, the minimizing of drudgery, the elimination of needless obstacles and irritations, the freeing of the spirit from a petty bondage that it may aspire to higher things. Spirituality does not consist in the neglect of practical considerations, but is more certainly attained through recognition of their rightful place as the physical foundation of our everyday lives, and in their due subordination as means to the greater end. If this book shall aid ministers and parishes so to order their temporal affairs as to give a firmer foundation for the life of the spirit it will have answered the purpose which it is intended to serve.

I am indebted to the following persons for suggestive criticism and advice in the preparation of the book: Rev. S. A. Eliot, D.D., and President E. M. Wilbur, D.D., who have read the manuscript; Romney Spring, Esq., who has read the chapters involving legal questions; Mr. W. B. Aldrich, who has read Chapters VI, VII, and VIII; Dr. A. T. Davison, who has read Chapter XI; and, above all, to my wife, for constant encouragement and assistance.

H. W. F.

Cambridge, Massachusetts.
June, 1923.

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THE MINISTER
AND HIS PARISH

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CHAPTER I

THE CALL AND SETTLEMENT OF THE MINISTER

The bond between minister and parish.

It is the fashion in some circles today to criticize a phrase much used by earlier generations, "the sacred calling of the ministry." The modern critic declares that the ministry is no more sacred than any other honorable occupation, and he is likely to go on to describe it in economic terms—the minister is a "salesman of religion," whose business it is to stimulate a demand for his "goods." It is, of course, quite true that all toil is hallowed, "the meanest work divine," if performed as a service of God and in accordance with his laws. Nevertheless, the work of a minister in his parish, when ideally conceived and worthily fulfilled, must always be marked by a peculiar quality of devotion and intimacy which distinguish it from other professional and commercial pursuits. The lawyer's confidential relation to his client, or the doctor's to his patient, does, indeed, bear a certain resemblance to the minister's relation to his parishioner, but in either of these cases the relationship touches but a single phase of the life of the individual served. The true minister, however, enters into very close personal relations with his people—sharing their joys, comforting them in sorrow, strengthening them in disappointment, failure and temptation,

interpreting to them the ways of God and the laws of life.

The calling is sacred not because the minister as such is a sacrosanct person, set apart from the rest of men by a mystical rite and characterized by an unworldly holiness, but because he deals with the deepest problems of human life, the most far-reaching speculations of the mind, the highest aspirations of the soul. To the minister come the young lovers to plight their troth to one another; the happy parents carrying the newborn life to be received into the congregation of Christ's flock; the mother asking help for her son who is daily sinking deeper into evil ways; the business man puzzled over some problem of ethics; the man burdened with the sin from which he would fain be delivered; the woman groping in the night of despair. The minister goes as a reconciler into homes where a tragic break is threatened; or with cheer and courage to a bedside of long-drawn-out pain; or with the great words of consolation and peace to the soul that is slipping off its garment of flesh and will see no more an earthly dawn. He stands before his people to lead them in worship; to help them uplift their hearts in aspiration; to put into words their deepest convictions; to set forth the way which leads to righteousness and joy and peace. These are the sanctities of the ministry. It deals with souls, and "the guidance of souls is the art of arts."¹

The value of such a service cannot be measured in economic terms, nor paid for in dollars and cents. It is not given for a price, but for the love of souls. It is on an altogether different plane from the service rendered to the community by the business man. From a legal point of view the relationship between a minister and his parish is, indeed, a contractual one, necessarily based upon a mutual agreement as to service to be rendered and compensation to be received, as every human relationship must be which involves rights and duties between man and man. It inevitably has an economic foundation, since the minister has a physical life to be sustained, and must pay, like other men, for the goods which he consumes. But these

¹ Gregory the Great—"Regulæ Pastoralis Liber," Part I, Chap. I.

legal and economic relations, though the inevitable foundations of the minister's work, are not of its essence. Its really valuable and significant aspects cannot be defined in any contract; the influence of a good minister in the life of the community cannot be weighed in balances, nor paid for at so much per day. For the relationship of a minister to his parish is, above all, a spiritual bond, finding expression through the medium of the flesh, as every spiritual bond must in this earthly life, but transcending the material basis which is its necessary incident.

Therefore such a relationship is not to be entered into lightly or unadvisedly, but reverently, discreetly, soberly and in the fear of God. Like marriage, it ought never to be regarded by either party merely as an arrangement of convenience, nor as a stipulated service for hire. So to misconceive it is to prostitute a spiritual relationship by turning it into a business transaction, whereas its real purpose is the advancement of ideal ends and the upbuilding of human souls by a coöperative enterprise. Happiness in marriage, however, is most certainly secured by a clear recognition of mutual duties and obligations, and by a thorough understanding between husband and wife as to the economic basis of their common life. Such an understanding promotes effective coöperation, and removes petty causes of friction and irritation which are liable to develop into sordid squabbles. Married life is most likely to be sustained on a high moral and spiritual level when husband and wife know themselves to be equal partners in a common enterprise, sharing alike its burdens and perplexities, its sorrows and triumphs. So likewise, the pastoral relationship is most likely to bear the fullest measure of spiritual fruit when it is based upon a clear understanding of the rights and the duties of both the minister and the parish; upon a full recognition of the inevitable economic basis of their common life; and upon complete frankness and mutual confidence. The purpose of the discussion which follows is to make clear these underlying legal and economic conditions, which, when recognized and understood, give a firm foundation upon which the true work of the church can be carried forward.

The channels of communication between churches and ministers.

The first problem to be considered is that of the establishment of communication between the church seeking a minister and a minister desiring a settlement. A pulpit is vacant: how shall the church secure a suitable minister? A minister is looking for a church to serve; how shall he find a pulpit which he is qualified to fill? The machinery for bringing the church and the minister together varies greatly in different branches of the Christian Church, but practically every denomination has some form of organization for meeting this need.

In those churches in which authority is most highly centralized the bishop in charge of a given diocese or district assigns to a vacant church such of the available priests or ministers as may seem to him best fitted for the position, often without much consultation with the congregation to be served. That is the autocratic or monarchical method. In the hands of a wise, impartial, spiritually-minded bishop, it may secure for a parish a minister better fitted to its needs than it could find by independent action, but it robs the parish of initiative; diminishes its sense of responsibility; encourages the minister to look primarily to his ecclesiastical superior for reward and promotion; and, in unwise or corrupt hands, leads to favoritism and unjust discrimination.

In those denominations, on the other hand, in which each congregation is an autonomous, self-governing body, federated with other churches of the same order, the congregations themselves commonly select their own ministers. Sometimes such a church may make application to the denominational organization which has authority to recommend names and to give information; sometimes it may deal directly with possible candidates of whom it has heard. This method involves the dangers as well as the advantages of independence, for it weakens the bond which ought to bind the individual church to others of its own communion, it increases the risk that the churches will make their choice upon inadequate information, and it

exposes them to a greater danger of exploitation by unworthy candidates for the ministry. Nevertheless this is the method of democracy, dominant in Protestantism today. Even in those Protestant churches which are episcopally organized there appears to be a strong tendency towards the practice of the selection of a minister by the local parish, subject to the approval of the bishop. The problem, therefore, is that of providing safeguards against the dangers and abuses of this system, so that it may be administered with the maximum efficiency.

The candidate for a pulpit.

A man who desires settlement as the minister of a church, whether he be a theological student finishing his course but not yet ordained, or a man already in the ministry desiring to find a new field of service, must establish connections with the responsible authorities of that branch of the Christian Church in which he wishes to work. If he be not yet on the ministerial list of his own communion, he must first of all fulfill the established requirements for obtaining recognition as a minister authorized to take charge of a pulpit. The hospitality of the pulpit can be offered only to men who thus fulfill the prescribed and legitimate requirements of their own denomination. Those requirements are usually the fruit of long experience, and are intended to protect both the churches and the ministerial body from the intrusion of men not qualified by character or training for the office of the ministry, and from exploitation by pulpit adventurers and charlatans. Therefore no self-respecting man will try to take short cuts into the ministry. The shepherd goes in by the door. His denominational authorities rightly look with suspicion on one who tries to climb into the sheepfold by some other way.

The candidate for a pulpit, after securing the necessary status within his own denomination, should ask the official intermediary to present his name to such churches with vacant pulpits as offer opportunities of service for which he is reasonably well fitted. A man thoroughly trained and of good personal qualifications may fail in his ministry

over one parish, where he does not fit, and yet be thoroughly successful in another. The problem is one of finding a church where his particular gifts and abilities may have the amplest opportunity for expression. The candidate should not, therefore, necessarily accept the first call which comes to him, nor be in too much of a hurry to be settled, but should look for the place which needs him and for which he is best adapted. He must not, of course, expect perfection, nor set too high an estimate on his own value, but he will do well to refuse a call unless he is reasonably convinced that he can fulfill, with a measurable degree of satisfaction, the obligations which he takes upon himself.

The candidate must also consider the type of service which he wishes to undertake. Shall he serve for a time as an assistant in a large and well-established church, or shall he seek the pulpit of a smaller church of which he shall have sole charge? There is much to be said in favor of the young minister seeking service, for at least a year or two, as an assistant in a large and well-established parish, in which he may obtain practical training under the guidance of an experienced minister. That is the universal practice in the Roman Church, in which the young priest serves as a curate for six or eight, or even as much as a dozen or fourteen years before being placed in charge of a parish. It is also a common practice in the Church of England and in the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country, although in those churches the term of a curate's service is commonly not longer than two or three years. This practice is, unfortunately, much less common in churches of other Protestant denominations. The candidate who wishes a church of his own must, of course, expect to begin with a rural church, or one in a small town or in a newer community of our country. He will do well not to settle in his own home town, but to go where the people have not known him from infancy. The home folks are likely to regard him as a boy long after he has attained maturity, and to ask the question of the Nazarenes of long ago, "Is not this the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?"

It is a common practice for a candidate, who desires to be heard in a given church, to ask his personal friends to recommend him to the church. This method is free from objection only when judiciously followed. Recommendations, to have any value, must proceed from persons whose names will carry some weight with the church, and should be frank and accurate statements of the candidate's qualifications and limitations, rather than indiscriminating eulogies. The candidate should take care not to flood the committee with letters of recommendation. Two or three judicious letters may help to secure the candidate a hearing, whereas a large number of letters tends to put the committee on their guard against the man for whom his friends seem to be acting in concert. Furthermore, letters of recommendation are always more valued when they do not come unsolicited. Therefore the minister will often do well simply to ask the official denominational intermediary, in sending his name to the church, to add that they can secure information about him by writing to such and such persons.

The practice of the candidate's writing directly to the church to solicit a hearing for himself is very objectionable; yet not infrequently when the pulpit of a church becomes vacant, the committee in charge will receive a considerable number of personal letters from ministers asking that they may be heard. This practice is to be condemned without qualification, and many parish committees are wise enough at once to mark off their list of candidates the ministers from whom they may receive any such direct solicitation.

The practice has also arisen in recent times of ministers advertising for churches in the denominational press. The practice is theoretically unobjectionable if it is done anonymously, and may, in rare instances, lead to a happy settlement, but such an advertisement almost of necessity involves the minister in a self-laudatory estimate of his own value in a form liable to sound boastful. Therefore the candidate's best method of approach ought normally to be through the established intermediary.

The church with a vacant pulpit.

It is almost always a grave disadvantage to a church to be for any length of time without a pastor. Therefore, as soon as it is evident that the pulpit is to be vacated, the church should promptly appoint a Pulpit Supply Committee. That committee should be thoroughly representative of the various elements in the church. In particular those whose age is under forty-five or fifty should be more largely represented than those above that age, since upon them will chiefly devolve the responsibility for the church for the next quarter century. A minister ought not, that is, to be chosen primarily to please the old people who will in the course of a few years pass from this earthly scene. A thoroughly representative committee will necessarily be a rather large one. If it include more than ten or a dozen persons it should appoint an executive committee, consisting of the chairman, secretary and one other, authorized to conduct negotiations without being obliged to call the whole committee together for too frequent consultation.

Unless the committee is already thoroughly informed as to available possibilities for the vacant pulpit it should at once get into communication with the appropriate denominational officer and secure from him a list of possible candidates, with such information about them as can be given. Generally the committee will find itself with a long list of names to be weeded out. All sorts of possible and impossible candidates will be suggested.

The committee may proceed by one of several methods. The worst possible method is for the committee to hear "the candidate whose name is legion," that is, to hear through a long succession of Sundays all the men whose names have been proposed. This method involves a maximum amount of competition between candidates, odious comparisons between this and that man, and results in confusing and often in splitting the congregation. A better method is to select not more than two or three names, after a careful study of each candidate's character and qualifications, his record of professional service and his preaching ability.

Most Protestant churches lay too much stress upon the candidate's preaching ability and give quite inadequate consideration to his training, experience, the quality of his pastoral and administrative work, and the place which he has made for himself in the community. They forget that the most taking candidate does not necessarily make the most satisfactory minister; that solid and durable qualities of character are more important than ability to display all one's goods in the shop window. This investigation of the several candidates is, of course, the first step, and should be made before, and not after, the men under consideration are invited to preach. It is, of course, a waste of time to consider men who cannot possibly be secured, yet sometimes a minister who has given no sign of wishing a change may have hidden reasons for being glad of an opportunity to move. Often the denominational intermediary can advise the committee as to whether a man whose name they are contemplating is possibly within their reach.

When the committee has made up its mind as to the two or three candidates of largest promise, who might also be willing to consider a call, they should arrange to have these men heard by several members of the committee, and on more than one occasion. It is not fair to judge any preacher on a single hearing. Every man has an off day now and then—he may have a bad cold, or be unusually fatigued, or on the other hand, the committee may happen to hear him when he is preaching in much better form than is usual. It is also wise for the committee to hear a man in his own pulpit rather than to have him preach in the church which is considering him. If he comes as a candidate he is inevitably more or less self-conscious, and the congregation itself is in a critical mood. Whenever practicable, therefore, the committee should send some of its members to hear the possible candidate in his own pulpit on at least two Sundays when he is not aware of their presence. This method, of course, is not possible where the candidate lives at a great distance from the church which desires to call him. In that case it will probably be necessary to ask him to come on, so that he can be heard

by at least some members of the congregation. He may be invited to preach in the vacant pulpit as an avowed candidate, but, when practicable, it is often better to arrange an exchange for him with the minister of some near-by church which the committee can visit. The self-consciousness of the candidate is thereby reduced to a minimum, his own congregation is less likely to be prematurely upset by the possibility of losing him, and the church which is considering him avoids the risk of finding itself in an equivocal relation to him.

The best method of all is for the committee to be given authority to select a single candidate, the best available man whom it can find, to be recommended to the church, which reserves only the right of a final vote to confirm or reject the committee's recommendation. This means giving large powers and responsibility to the committee, in which the parish must have entire confidence, but the method is the one most likely to lead to satisfactory results. A variation of this method—which may be the only practicable one in the case of an unattached candidate under consideration by a church so located that he must make a considerable journey to reach it—is to ask him to come as a supply for one, two or three months, that the candidate and the church may make acquaintance, with the understanding that at the end of the stated period the connection may be made a permanent one if mutually agreeable, either party, however, being at liberty to withdraw if a definite settlement seems undesirable. Where this method is followed the church should pay the candidate's traveling expenses and its usual salary during the stipulated period.

Courtesy due the visiting minister.

The church which invites a minister to occupy its pulpit, whether a candidate or a supply, is under certain obligations of courtesy to him. It should always send him exact information as to the location of the church and the best route to reach it; the hour of service; the order of worship and hymn book used, unless the church uses some standard denominational form; and where the visitor is

to find entertainment for the night or for necessary meals. If he be a stranger and the time of his arrival is known, he should be met at the railroad station. The fee for a single Sunday should generally be one per cent of the annual salary, plus the visitor's expenses for travel. If the church has asked more than one man to come as candidates it should hear all before voting to call any, or, if it comes to a clear decision to call one, should inform the others and give them the choice of either canceling their appointments or of filling them as supplies. The church should be careful not to hold out false hopes of a call by complimentary phrases leading several men to imagine that they are about to be selected.

Courtesy due from the candidate to the church.

No minister should accept an invitation to preach as an avowed candidate in any church if he knows in advance that he would not consider a call thereto. A man may, of course, sometimes preach in a vacant pulpit to which he has been invited only as a supply, and create so favorable an impression that he is unexpectedly confronted with a call. But, as a general principle, a minister who has no intention of accepting a call is as much bound in honor not to encourage one as a high-minded woman is bound to head off an offer of marriage which she would not consider. If he be already settled it is unprofessional for him to encourage calls to other pulpits merely for the sake of impressing his own congregation with his value, or as a means of securing a raise in his salary. After one or two such experiences his congregation is likely to be rather glad to let him go.

If the candidate, after making an appointment to preach in a given church, receives a call to another pulpit which he intends to accept, he should inform the church with which he has made the preaching appointment, giving it the opportunity of either canceling the appointment or of receiving him as a supply. If, however, he has not definitely decided to accept the call in hand, he is at liberty to fill the appointment and take his choice between two calls, provided he is entirely frank with both churches and

avoids any appearance of trying to make them bid against each other for his services.

Courtesy of church to church.

A church which has decided to call a minister already settled elsewhere is under obligation to deal fairly with its sister church. A church should not call a minister who has but recently settled over another parish, unless it is known that the arrangement has proved unsatisfactory, but should give the parish already in possession of the minister a fair chance to work out its plans with him. A large and rich church should not offer a minister a much larger salary than he is receiving on condition that he come to it immediately, but should remember that the minister is under obligations to his present parish; that often the terms of his settlement require him to give three months' notice; and that in any case it is not fair for him to drop everything in midseason, but that he must be allowed time to bring his pastorate to a dignified conclusion. That will also allow the church from which he is resigning time to adjust itself and to make plans for calling another minister. Finally, no church should call a man from another pulpit without giving the church over which he is already settled full opportunity to retain him in its service if it wishes to do so and is in position to offer him satisfactory considerations. It is not well that a Christian church should follow the methods of the children of Dan in their seduction of the priest of the house of Micah.

Issuing a call.

When the pulpit committee has found a candidate whom it is prepared to recommend to the parish, it should ask for a conference with him. The committee should not take this step unless it is reasonably certain that the parish will accept its recommendation, nor should it ever ask two men to allow their names to be submitted simultaneously, in competition. If the committee is undecided between two candidates it should first refer the matter to the parish and receive authority to proceed further with one or the other man. The committee should never require a candi-

date to pledge himself in advance to accept a call should one be issued. It should be content with an assurance that he will "seriously consider" a call, though, if the candidate himself volunteers the statement that he would give "favorable consideration" to a call, his words may be regarded as tantamount to an assurance that he will accept it.

In the conference or correspondence between the committee and the candidate the latter is entitled to full and exact information as to the condition of the church and the character and prospects of the community in which it is located. The candidate should be informed as to the actual financial condition of the church; its membership and parish organizations; its buildings and equipment; its history and its prospects. A parish committee should never conceal unpleasant facts or discouraging features from the candidate,² though it is not necessary to go into details of old scandals or church squabbles, save as they affect the existing situation. The information should include a statement as to the salary; the parsonage (if any); the minister's annual vacation; the number and type of paid assistants (stenographer, parish worker, assistant minister, if any); and also as to any unusual features in the church's situation or plans for the future. If, after due conference, the candidate has given assurance of his willingness to consider a call upon the terms proposed, a meeting of the persons legally composing the church must be duly called, and a formal vote taken as to whether the candidate shall be invited to serve the church. It is essential that the state law governing church corporations should be duly observed in all particulars, as well as the canon law, or the constitution and by-laws of the individual church. In

² A certain church called a minister to its pulpit. He refused to come unless an indebtedness of \$10,000 was paid off. The parish committee sent him word that the debt had been taken care of, whereupon he accepted and was duly installed. Then he discovered that ten men in the church had each paid off at the bank \$1,000 of the debt, themselves taking notes from the church, so that the church was still in debt, though to its own members instead of to a bank. It is unnecessary to point out that the proceeding was a thoroughly dishonorable deception of the candidate.

most states the law gives the power to call or to dismiss a minister, and to fix his salary, to the voting members of the church alone. Without their vote no governing board or committee can legally engage him, nor can he be installed as settled minister of the church. The call and the minister's acceptance should always be put into writing, and filed for reference, it being desirable that both minister and church should keep copies.

The contract between church and minister.

Any church which engages a minister to carry on its work thereby assumes certain obligations to him which it must fulfill so long as the relationship between the two parties endures. In the eye of the law the minister is a professional man employed to render services the general character of which is a matter of common understanding even when a detailed agreement has not been entered into. He is not an employee working on wages. Sometimes a church speaks of "hiring a minister"—a detestable phrase which should never be used to describe the pastoral relationship. The minister is not a "hireling of the sheep" but a shepherd of the flock; not a "hired man" on wages whose employment may be terminated on brief notice, but a professional man in a sacred calling of standing and dignity. A state does not "hire" a governor, nor a city a mayor, nor a university a professor. Neither should a church debase the ministry by attempting to "hire" a pastor.

The terms under which a minister serves a given parish form a legal contract, even when they are informal in character. Such informality is undesirable, since a "verbal understanding" is liable later to be transformed into a serious misunderstanding. Any arrangement, therefore, by which a minister is engaged to serve a parish, whether as a "stated supply," as an assistant, an associate, or as the settled minister of the church, should be set down in writing and preserved for future reference.

(a) As stated supply.

When the minister comes as a stated supply the arrangement is usually for a given number of Sundays, at the end

of which it is automatically terminated. If the period is not stated the arrangement may be terminated at any time by either minister or parish, without breach of contract. The service of a stated supply is an arrangement not to be recommended except when the visiting minister is filling a pulpit during the temporary absence of the settled pastor; or in a church which for one or another reason is not prepared promptly to settle a minister; or when the minister comes as a candidate but a more intimate acquaintance between him and the parish is desirable before a formal call be issued or accepted. It is seldom to the best interest of either party that a minister should serve a parish as stated supply for more than a few weeks or months at the longest. Either he should be installed as the settled minister of the church, or should give way to another.

(b) As the assistant minister.

When the minister comes as an assistant it is usually for a limited period, and to perform certain clearly defined duties under the direction of the minister of the church. The assistant is ordinarily a young man, just out of the seminary, who expects to go on to a church of his own in a year or two, though sometimes, in a large church, an assistant minister may find a field of service large and interesting enough for his life work. He should be ordained, but he should not be installed, since he is not a settled minister of the parish, but strictly an assistant to the minister. If the latter resigns or dies the position of the assistant is unchanged, even though his duties increase, both during the period when the pulpit is vacant and after another minister is settled. In order to avoid misunderstandings the terms of his engagement should be clearly defined in writing—the period of his service; his salary; and the nature of his duties, which normally involve specified parts of the administrative and pastoral work, and perhaps responsibility for the conduct of worship and for preaching at certain services. Legally his engagement is a contract between him and the parish—not between him and the minister whom he assists—but that minister should always

be fully cognizant of the details of the arrangement, and, in practice, frequently acts as the agent of the parish in selecting the assistant and defining the terms of engagement.

(c) *As associate minister.*

The position of an associate minister is quite distinct from that of an assistant, both legally and professionally, though sometimes parishes are ignorant of the distinction, and engage a minister as an associate when they mean to secure only an assistant. An associate minister is duly installed as one of the settled ministers of the church engaging him, a colleague of the senior minister, his junior partner—not his assistant. At whatever date thereafter the senior minister resigns or dies, be it soon or late, the associate remains the minister of the church, without any further action on his part or that of the parish, and is, by both law and custom, entitled to all the rights of that position. The parish may not install another minister over his head, or assign him a colleague without his consent. No church, therefore, should call an associate minister without clearly expecting him to succeed the senior minister in due time, and no minister should accept such an invitation without a definite understanding as to his position. Generally an associate minister is not installed until the senior minister approaches an age at which he requires more relief from his duties than can be secured by the employment of an assistant. It is wise, therefore, to select as associate a man considerably younger, who may reasonably be expected to serve for a good many years after his senior colleague has disappeared. Otherwise the two ministers will grow old together and the church may find itself under the charge of two old men, neither with sufficient vigor to carry on its work. Inasmuch as the relationship between a minister and his associate often involves rather delicate personal and professional contacts, it is highly desirable that the terms of the associate's settlement and the duties expected of him should be fully defined in writing.

(d) As settled minister.

A great majority of the churches of this country have, of course, neither assistant nor associate ministers, but are administered by one settled pastor. The terms of settlement vary very widely in different localities and denominations, so that it is impossible to do more than indicate the general principles which should govern the settlement of a minister in a parish. In churches governed by a recognized body of canon law³ the terms of settlement, the duration of a pastorate and the mode by which it may be terminated are determined by the law of the church. In denominations without a formulated body of canon law the established customs of the denomination prevail.

The minister's tenure of office.

In earlier days in New England the minister was commonly settled for life. He did not expect to move to some other parish, but looked forward to spending all his days with the church over which he was first settled, and to which he sometimes gave a bond as surety for the due fulfillment of his duties. Legally he had a life tenure there. He could be dismissed only if he preached theological doctrines which departed from the essential teachings of his church; or if he were wilfully negligent of his duties; or if guilty of immoral or criminal conduct; and, if he chose to fight the case, the parish must prove its accusations before an ecclesiastical council, or in a court of law. Until his dismissal for cause took effect the parish was under obligation to pay his salary, and its property could be attached and levied upon by law for this purpose.⁴

³“Canon law is the body of laws and regulations made by or adopted by ecclesiastical authority for the government of the Christian organization and its members.”—“Cath. Encyc.,” IX, 56, 2.

⁴“The settlement of a minister over a Congregational church and society, without any limitations as to its continuance or any express stipulations as to the mode of its dissolution, is a contract for life, determinable only in the manner and for the causes established by law.”—Mass. Digest, Vol. VI, col. 12789; (1807) *Avery v. Inhab-*

A series of important legal decisions in Massachusetts courts during the first half of the nineteenth century strongly supported the principle of the minister's right to life tenure when no provision was made in the call for some method of dissolving the pastoral relationship. It was felt that security of tenure was essential to the dignity and effectiveness of the minister's work, and that he should not be subject to dismissal for other than grave and weighty cause. Perhaps as a result of these decisions some churches adopted the custom of inserting in the call a provision that the pastorate might be terminated after due notice, if an ecclesiastical council had so recommended. As a matter of fact many disputes were referred to such councils, either a mutual council called by both parties or an *ex parte* council called by one side only, which heard evidence and offered recommendations, but the judgment of such a council had not, of course, the effect of a legal

itants of Tyringham, 3 Mass. 160, 3 Am. Dec. 105; (1812) *Burr v. Inhabitants of First Parish in Sandwich*, 9 Mass. 277; (1836) *Sheldon v. Congregational Parish in Easton*, 41 Mass. (24 Pick.) 281, 286.

"Where a minister has been settled, and always ready to perform all the duties growing out of the relation so created, and has performed such parochial duties as the society would permit him to perform, he can recover his salary so long as the relation continues."—Mass. Digest, Vol. VI, col. 12795. *Thompson v. Cath. Cong. Soc. in Rehoboth*, 22 Mass. (5 Pick.) 469.

"Every Congregational minister may forfeit his office by certain misfeasances and non-feasances. There are three established causes for forfeiture:—first, an essential change of doctrine; second, a wilful neglect of duty; and third, immoral or criminal conduct."—Mass. Digest, Vol. VI, col. 12792. *Sheldon v. Congregational Parish in Easton*, 41 Mass. (24 Pick.) 281.

"A clergyman, before he assumes the high duties of pastor, is bound fully and frankly to disclose his theological tenets and impliedly he undertakes to continue of the same faith and teach the same doctrines. If he changes these, he ceases to perform one of the conditions of his settlement, and entitles the parish to a dissolution of the contract. But it is not every change of opinion or variation of belief, which will be sufficient to produce this effect. It must be a substantial and essential change, the adoption of 'a new system of divinity,' so that the parishioners 'are obliged to hear doctrines which they disapprove and which they do not believe.'"—Judge Morton. *Sheldon v. Inhab. of Easton*, 21 Pick. 287.

decision and was not binding unless formally accepted by both parties.⁵ The calling of such an ecclesiastical council is now rare.

Many churches today put into the call a provision that the pastorate may be terminated by either the church or the minister on given notice—generally three months'. Some churches provide for the annual election of the minister. This arrangement is not to be recommended, for it does not sufficiently safeguard the minister, whose tenure of office is hardly more secure than if he were a stated supply. He is too much at the mercy of any dissatisfied clique who may take a fancy to some other man. Nor is it conducive to the best interests of the church, which is liable to unsettling discussions as to whether the minister shall or shall not be asked to stay another year. The provision that three months' notice must be given by either party, the settlement being otherwise for an indeterminate period, is ordinarily the most satisfactory plan.

Where the minister is settled without any provision for the termination of the pastoral relationship he probably still has a legal claim to a life tenure, although the conditions of church life have changed so radically in the last century that it is possible that the courts would not now require a church to maintain a minister with whose services a majority of the parish was dissatisfied. The right of the minister to resign that he may take another charge is now generally recognized, and this might seem to involve the right of the congregation to invite the minister to resign when such action seems to the best interests of the church. Obviously it is most unfortunate to have such an issue dragged into court. A church should be very slow to ask for a resignation, and, when such action is necessary, should act with the largest measure of consideration for its minister.

The cases where a minister refuses such a request are rare, and only occur when the minister believes that some principle is at stake, or is strongly supported by a faction in the congregation, when the issue usually depends upon which party can control the church. As a

⁵ *Stearns v. First Parish in Bedford*, 21 Pick. 114.

matter of policy it is almost always unwise for the minister to fight a request for his resignation, even if he be supported by a considerable group of his parishioners. If he wins, it will be at the cost of dismembering his parish, leaving wounds difficult or impossible to heal; his ministry will be marred or crippled; and he himself is liable to be embittered. Furthermore, the dissatisfaction which has once been manifested is liable to raise its head again. Therefore when he finds that a substantial or determined minority is against him it is better for him to endure what he may deem a gross injustice, and look for another field of service.

The act of installation.

The formal installation, or institution, of the newly chosen minister should take place at the earliest convenient date after he begins his active service of the church. Installation is the public ratification of his contract with the parish, lacking which he is not legally its settled minister. Ecclesiastically it is the act of conferring upon him the rights of spiritual leadership involved in his position as minister. If he has not been already ordained the service of ordination should precede or be combined with the service of installation, for, though a layman may be employed by a parish to perform some of the offices of a minister, the law does not recognize him as a minister until he has been ordained according to the usages of the church to which he belongs. The form of installation is, of course, a matter of denominational usage, but it should always include a spoken invitation from the church to the minister to fill its pulpit, and his acceptance of the invitation.

The word "induction" is sometimes, but incorrectly, used as equivalent to installation, or institution. Induction was a usage of the Church of England, inherited from the Middle Ages, by which the temporalities of his office were transferred to the incumbent, whereas institution was the conferring upon him of the spiritualities of his charge. Induction was carried out by an archdeacon under mandate from the bishop. The inductor took the candidate by the hand and gave him the keys of the church, with

which he opened the door, entering and shutting himself in. He then tolled the bell to make the fact of his induction known to his parishioners, afterwards opening the doors to admit them.⁶

In the modern Office of Institution in the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country, the equivalent of installation, the induction is now reduced to a sentence in the bishop's letter of institution, authorizing the incumbent "to claim and enjoy all the accustomed temporalities appertaining to your cure," and to the presentation of the keys of the church to the new rector by the senior warden, in recognition of his authority over its temporalities.

In most other Protestant churches the minister has no such control over the temporalities of the church as was symbolized by the ancient form of induction, and his rights in connection therewith are regulated by civil law, as will be indicated hereafter. In these churches, therefore, the service of installation is the recognition of a formal appointment to the spiritual leadership of a particular parish.

⁶ Phillimore, "Ecclesiastical Law" (2 ed.), Vol. I, p. 359. An interesting reference to this usage may be found in Izaak Walton's "Life of George Herbert": "When at his induction (1630) he was shut into Bemerton Church, being left there alone to toll the bell,—as the law requires him,—he staid so much longer than an ordinary time, before he returned to those friends that staid expecting him at the church-door, that his friend Mr. Woodnot looked in at the church-window, and saw him lie prostrate on the ground before the altar." This ancient usage has probably been seldom observed in this country, perhaps not at all since the Revolution, but at least one minister of King's Chapel, Boston, insisted upon it, although we are told that his parishioners resented his doing so. In the Annals of King's Chapel (Vol. I, pp. 390-392) we read of the induction of Rev. Roger Price, as rector, on June 25, 1729: "Mr. Price produced the Bishop of London's license and certificate, reading them in the church, and then delivered them to the Church Wardens to be recorded in the Church Book. . . . These being read, the Rev. Mr. Henry Harris, the Church Wardens, the Vestrymen, and the people who were present, all went out of the church, the Church Wardens at the door delivering the key of the church to the Rev. Mr. Price, who, locking himself in the church, tolled the bell, and then unlocked the door of the church, receiving the Church Wardens and Vestrymen into the church again, who wished him joy upon his having possession of the church."

CHAPTER II

THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE MINISTER

*The status of the minister.*¹

The minister who has accepted a call and has been duly ordained and settled over a church has acquired a certain standing in the community, with corresponding rights and obligations. His ordination gives him status as a civil officer qualified to solemnize marriages. His installation gives him status as the minister of a local church to which he now bears a definite legal and spiritual relationship.

The canon law of the Middle Ages recognized the clergy as a distinct caste within the body politic, as did the English common law after the Reformation, so far as the clergy of the Established Church were concerned. In both cases the clergy were granted certain privileges and exemptions which have now to a large extent disappeared in England. American civil law does not now recognize the clergy of any church as in any sense constituting a separate caste, but it does regard them as quasi-officers of the law for the solemnization of marriages, and gives them a certain measure of special protection in the exercise of their profession.

Canon law and "benefit of clergy."

Throughout the Middle Ages the clergy in England were exempt from the jurisdiction of the civil courts and could be tried only by ecclesiastical tribunals. This exemption covered all persons who had been tonsured and who wore ecclesiastical dress, and ability to read—which in early days was very rarely to be found among persons not in

¹ See Zollman, "American Civil Church Law," Chap. XII, for a full treatment of the legal aspects of this subject.

holy orders—was the test commonly applied to determine whether a given individual was or was not entitled to this “benefit of clergy.” As ability to read and write spread, however, many claimed “benefit of clergy” who were not entitled to it, even under the most liberal interpretation of the phrase, and the manifold and gross abuses arising therefrom led to a gradual limitation of “benefit of clergy,” although it was not until 1827 that all exemption of the clergy from the jurisdiction of the civil court was finally abolished by Parliament. In this country “benefit of clergy” was forbidden by Act of Congress in 1790.

Exemptions.

English common law provides that ecclesiastical persons are not under obligation to serve in any temporal office, because the proper discharge of their duties makes it inexpedient that they should be entangled with temporal business.² They are even forbidden to hold secular offices and employment, although before the Reformation high governmental administrative posts were commonly held by churchmen. In England a clergyman cannot be arrested while going to, attending, or returning from divine service. Formerly clergy were free from tolls and similar charges; now they are subject to all such charges unless especially exempted by Act of Parliament. In this country, as in England, ministers of religion are exempt from jury duty, and usually from military service, on the ground that such forms of service are incompatible with their professional duties. These exemptions, be it noted, are for the benefit not of the minister but of the community which he serves. The same principle governs the right of railroads to give reduced rates or passes to ministers. It is believed to be a benefit to the community that they should be enabled to travel at a minimum of expense, while engaged in professional duties. In some states a minister may not hold public office. Thus the constitution of the State of Delaware provides that “no ordained clergyman or ordained preacher of the gospel of

² Phillimore's “Ecclesiastical Law” (2d ed.), Vol. I, p. 473.

any denomination shall be capable of holding any civil office in this state, or of being a member of either branch of the legislature, while he continues in the exercise of the pastoral or clerical functions.”³

Solemnization of marriages.

In the performance of a marriage service the minister has a definite status as a public officer. Marriage in this country is a civil function. In Massachusetts ministers were forbidden in 1646 to celebrate marriages, but the law was, in this respect, gradually relaxed. The practice of two marriage ceremonies, one civil and the other ecclesiastical, which prevails in continental Europe, has, however, been avoided here by legislation which permits duly ordained ministers of any denomination to serve as civil officers in performing marriages. The statutes governing both marriage and divorce vary greatly in the different states of the Union, but, in general, any priest, minister, or rabbi ordained or appointed according to the custom of the church to which he belongs, who is actively engaged in its service, and is a resident of the state, may perform marriages within its borders. He does so, however, “as a minister of the law or quasi-officer, deriving his authority from the statutes.”⁴ It is essential that his ordination should have duly taken place, and that the minister should have a recognized status as such in some organized religious body. An itinerant evangelist, holding occasional religious services on his own initiative, or the casual occupant of a pulpit who is chiefly engaged in secular pursuits, is not qualified to solemnize marriages. Massachusetts permits no non-resident minister to conduct a marriage in the state; New Hampshire will give a non-resident a special license upon due application; a few states permit any ordained minister to perform the service even though he be a resident of another state. Few states require the registration

³ See Zollman, “American Civil Church Law,” p. 334. Zollman hints at the incompatibility of such a constitutional provision with the statutes which give ministers a quasi-official status for the solemnization of marriages.

⁴ Zollman, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

of ministers qualified to perform marriages, and there is a lamentable lack of uniformity in legislation governing the subject.⁵ It is a matter of prime importance that every minister should, at the outset of his ministry or whenever he moves to another state, before he performs any marriage, inform himself of the marriage laws of his state. Otherwise, he is liable to find himself guilty of violation of the law in some respect. In most states a marriage entered into in good faith is held to be valid even if the minister who performs the ceremony was not legally qualified to do so, but the minister in question may be subject to penalties. His ignorance of the law is no excuse; it is his duty to know the law. A copy of the marriage laws can generally be obtained, without charge, upon application to the Secretary of the State.

In most states the parties to the marriage must secure a license from the clerk of the town or city of their residence, or from the county clerk, and the minister may not perform the ceremony until the license, duly made out, is actually in his hands. After the ceremony he is responsible for the prompt return of the license, duly signed, to the town, city, or county clerk who issued it. The minister is not responsible for errors or false statements in the license, if it be made out in due form, but if he discovers that an erroneous statement has been made in the license with apparent intent to deceive he should refuse to perform the ceremony until a correct license is procured. If the error is one which does not in any way affect the validity of the marriage but is merely accidental,⁶ he should proceed with the ceremony but should inform the clerk who issued the license, when he makes his return, asking that the record be corrected.

The minister is not, however, under obligation to marry any couple who may come to him, even if the license be duly made out. He may decline to do so if he has reason to suspect that the statements made therein are untrue—as

⁵ See Hall and Brooke, "American Marriage Laws," 1919.

⁶ For example, a misspelling of a name—as Lewis for Louis, or Clarke for Clark—when there is no doubt as to the identity of the person involved; or an inaccuracy as to the place of birth, or as to the age of one or the other party when a question as to the age of consent is not involved.

for instance, that one of the parties is under legal age, or is for any other reason not competent to marry. He may also refuse to marry divorced persons, and should do so if the canon law of his church forbids its clergy to perform the ceremony in such case. Where the laws of his church leave him free to use his own discretion, he will do well in every case to make careful inquiry into the conditions under which the divorce was granted, to make certain that the divorced person may be legally married again, and to avoid the chances of scandal which may arise from his too complaisant willingness to perform such ceremonies. The minister, however, should not decline to marry a couple save for very good and serious reasons. He may seek to persuade a couple against a foolish runaway match, but it is not his business to decide, at the end of a few minutes' conversation, whether or not the marriage is a wise one, and he must remember that his refusal of a couple who are honest and sincere in their intentions may deeply wound them at one of the holiest moments of their lives.

Confidential communications.

There are many occasions upon which the minister receives confidential communications of the most intimate sort. If he stays long in a parish he is likely to know many things about his parishioners—their sins, their sorrows, their hidden tragedies—which he has no right to communicate to any living soul. The voluntary disclosure of such secrets, especially of information given in the confessional or in the course of church discipline, is a most serious breach of professional ethics, and may also subject him to civil liability. The Roman priest is absolutely forbidden to disclose any confession made to him, save to his bishop in certain very exceptional cases. The Protestant minister who has any desire to retain the confidence of his people must likewise be known as a man who can be absolutely counted on to hold his tongue. He must not tell even his wife—for though his parishioners may like her, they have no intention of confessing to her too.

The minister must, however, remember the possibility of being called upon to testify in a court of law about some

matter which has come to his knowledge through such disclosures from persons seeking his spiritual advice. At common law such communications are not privileged, although in some states statute law forbids the disclosure by a clergyman or priest of communications made to them in the course of discipline by their respective churches.⁷ Such statutes have also been held to preclude the disclosure of the advice given by the spiritual adviser. In order that a communication be thus privileged it is necessary that it be made to the clergyman as such, in the course of discipline enjoined by the church, and that it be of such character as is necessary to enable him to discharge the function of his office. It must also have been made and received in confidence, although no express promise of secrecy is necessary. This covers the Roman Catholic confessional, and the confessional in the Protestant Episcopal Church, where it is in use. It may not in every case cover communications made in confidence to ministers of other Protestant denominations, because of the difficulty of determining whether they have been made in the course of "church discipline," often a point of great uncertainty in churches which lack a formal code for dealing with such matters.

Owing to the wide diversity of statutory provision in the several states of the Union the minister should seek sound legal advice as to the law which prevails in his domicile, that his conduct may, in some measure, be guided accordingly. Where there is no statute protecting him in the matter of confidential communications he must, of course, act as conscience dictates if summoned to give in court information thus received. If he feels that he has no right to make the disclosure called for—as a Roman priest would certainly feel about any matter made known to him in the confessional—he must refuse to give the required testimony, and be prepared to accept such penalty as may be inflicted for contempt of court.

There is one other point to be observed in this connection. The minister may not exercise any undue influence upon a parishioner, to the injury of other heirs, in order to secure a bequest for himself or for some charitable or

⁷ See 40 Cyc., p. 2390. Also Zollman, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

religious purpose in which he is interested. Where such undue influence is suspected, the court will not hold communications which he may have had with the testator to be confidential.

Slander and libel.

The minister is not a privileged person not amenable to the law of libel and slander, but is subject to that law for statements which he may make about other people, whether he speak in the pulpit or out of it, and he may be held for breach of the peace on account of the violence of his language. But he is not open to action for slander or libel for official announcements made in good faith in the course of church discipline, such as the pronouncement of a sentence of excommunication. "However, if the clergyman goes farther, and advises his people to shun the excommunicated person in business transactions and not to come near to his home or employ him . . . , he steps outside of his privilege and will be liable to an action of slander or libel."⁸

On the other hand, the law will carefully guard his standing and reputation as a professional man, and will protect him from any defamation of character which tends to injure his repute as a minister. His acts or words may be commented upon and criticized, like those of any public man, "but the commentator must confine his attention to them, and may not draw on his imagination for charges with which to soil the clergyman's character."⁹ In view of the fact that the minister's professional reputation is gravely affected by any injurious imputation as to his character, statements concerning him may be regarded as libelous and actionable which would not be held to be injurious to the reputation of a layman.

Contracts.

The minister is subject to the ordinary law of contracts. This is obviously the case as regards the contracts which he may enter into in everyday life. The law also applies to his engagement with his parish, since this, as was pointed

⁸ Zollman, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

⁹ Zollman, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

out in the first chapter, is legally a contractual relationship involving mutual rights and obligations. The minister who has been duly installed in a church has certain definite duties to perform. He has entered into a contract with the church to conduct its services of worship and to administer the sacraments in the manner established by the customs of his church; to preach with as much unction as the Lord gives him; to fulfill the duties of the pastoral office; and to exercise a general supervision over the educational and administrative activities of the parish. The emphasis on these various aspects of church work differs greatly in differing localities and denominations. In some places the community welfare work of an institutional church, or other administrative duties, may absorb the greater part of the minister's time and strength. In another church of marked ritualistic tendencies the conduct of daily services, and especially the frequent "celebration" of the eucharist, may be his primary obligation. In a non-liturgical church the weight of emphasis may be on the preaching. Elsewhere constant parish calling may be expected, and very moderate accomplishments in much else be forgiven a minister who is diligent in visiting his flock in their homes. In the nature of the case the precise details of fulfilling these offices cannot be laid down; but each man must do with all his heart and soul the various duties which fall to him.

The minister's duty to his parish.

The church, at least if it pays a fair salary, has a claim upon the minister's full time and strength. Unless by special arrangement, he has no right to add other remunerative employment to his ministry—teaching, lecturing, selling books or life insurance. If he cannot live on his salary, let him say so to the parish committee, and give them the choice of raising his salary, of setting him free for part of his time that he may earn money outside, or of accepting his resignation. Broadly speaking, however, it is undesirable for a minister to do outside work.¹⁰ He

¹⁰ This does not, of course, apply to the minister's wife, on whose time or service the church has no especial claim, unless she is also

begins the service of two masters, his professional work suffers, perhaps his interest in it weakens; he tends to do the thing which is immediately profitable to the neglect of what is spiritually important. Many a ministry has been wrecked by the temptation to increase the ministerial income by serving worldly interests on week days and God on Sundays. That, of course, does not mean that the minister should not accept fees for professional services, such as funerals and weddings outside his parish, or that he should never lecture, or write essays or a book if he be so gifted. But it does mean that he must be scrupulously careful that love of fees or fame does not lead to extra-professional lecturing or writing which absorb time and energy properly belonging to his church and for which he should not be paid twice. Some outside lecturing, some writing, he may perhaps do with advantage to his parish, which profits by his growing reputation—how much is a matter for prayerful inquiry, always remembering that few men can fulfill all their duties to their parish and do much of anything else besides.

A somewhat similar problem arises in connection with the minister's relation to the general activities of his denomination, and to the community in which he lives. His parish should recognize the right of the denomination to special service from him upon occasion. And most churches are glad to have their ministers take a reasonable part in community affairs. But it is very easy for an energetic and capable minister to be swamped with such activities. If he be a willing worker, he will be loaded with unpaid jobs to the limit of his capacity. All the community welfare enterprises in search of a man will try to draft him into service. If he be not on his guard, he finds himself

paid for some specific church work. A church has no right to regard the minister's wife as a parish assistant, whose services are thrown in with her husband's. She will, of course, do what she can to uphold her husband's work, but the church should not make demands upon her which it would not be justified in making on other church members. If her domestic situation is such that she is free to accept a salaried position, such as that of school-teacher, or to engage in other remunerative employment, that is her business, and it does not concern the parish.

the chairman—which usually means the chore-boy—of innumerable committees, to the grave detriment of his primary duties. His parish has a right to expect him to limit himself to those few outside interests for which he is especially fitted, and in those he should seek rather to be a counselor than an active administrator, for his real work is to carry on his church and not to run the Associated Charities or the School Board or the Public Library.

*The rights of the minister.*¹¹

The minister on his part has certain rights which the parish is under obligation to respect. He has a right to his full salary, paid promptly, and to have the parsonage properly maintained. He is master in his own pulpit; is sole judge of what and how he shall preach, except that he may not preach against the “essential doctrines” of his church, and that his calling requires him ever to speak the truth in love. So long as he remains the pastor of the church, and has not been enjoined or suspended by a civil or ecclesiastical court, he cannot be excluded from his pulpit or from the church building at the time of usual worship. If the congregation does not like his preaching its only redress is to terminate his pastorate in the customary way after due notice. Until such actual termination of his pastorate he alone has the right to conduct the service and to preach, or to invite another to occupy his pulpit. He has the sole right to say who shall or shall not preach in his pulpit, or with whom he will exchange. If he is wise he will not inflict upon his people other ministers whom they do not wish to hear, but if he does so their only recourse is to stay away from church. Another minister cannot be put in his place, and the parish can neither reduce his salary without his consent, nor refuse to pay it, since to do either is to break its contract with him. He must, however, conduct himself in such fashion as to cause no scandal, and he may not change the customary time or

¹¹ For many of the points in this and the following section I am indebted to three articles by Rev. R. F. Johonnot, LL.B. on “The Legal Relations of the Minister to his Parish,” in the *Universalist Leader* of May 27, June 3 and 10, 1911.

order of service without a vote passed by a majority of the members at a regular meeting. He has authority over the choir so far as the services of worship are concerned, though he may not ask of its members more than their contract stipulates, nor may he dismiss them for non-compliance, though he may insist that the church officers cause his wishes to be carried out.

Although he has the right to the full use of the church buildings for all the customary services, he has not, in most denominations other than the Protestant Episcopal, a legal right to possession of the keys of the church; though as a matter of common courtesy, as well as of convenience, he should be supplied with a set so that he may have access to the building at all times. His authority, however, is limited to the spiritual administration of his parish. As he is not responsible for raising the money by which its activities are supported, he is equally without power on his own initiative to authorize expenditures. He may make no contract binding upon the parish for any supplies, or for repairs or alterations to the church property, nor may he engage or dismiss employees, such as a sexton, or the choir, unless he is acting as the agent of the parish under a formal vote of the trustees or congregation. The minister should be punctiliously careful not to overstep his authority in these matters.

Furthermore, he may not grant the use of the church building or parish house for any purposes outside their regular uses, except by consent of the church officers, or, in the last resort, of the qualified voters of the church. No matter how excellent the cause may be—a public lecture, a meeting in behalf of peace, or for some wholly admirable community purpose—if it be other than the usual services of worship or a customary activity of some church society, permission should always be obtained from the church officers. The property does not belong to the minister but to the parish, which has the right to say to what extent it shall be used for miscellaneous purposes. The minister's right over it is limited to its use for the particular purpose for which he is engaged.

On the other hand, neither the trustees nor the parish

ought to rent the church property, or permit its use, for miscellaneous purposes in the face of the minister's disapproval. They perhaps have the legal right to do so, since the property belongs to the parish, but, since their action may prove embarrassing to the minister, or prejudicial to his reputation in the community, they are morally bound to regard his wishes. They should also recognize his authority to forbid any line of action detrimental to the moral welfare of the church or subversive of accepted church discipline, even when proposed under the auspices of some church organization. Thus the minister is in duty bound to put a stop to a raffle if one be introduced at a church fair in the parish house, or to forbid dancing or a dramatic performance there in those denominations which do not sanction such forms of entertainment.

The minister's relation to the governing board of his church.

The right of the minister to attend the meetings of the trustees, prudential committee, vestry, or other governing body of the parish, is governed by church law or custom, which varies in the different Protestant denominations. In the Protestant Episcopal Church the rector always presides at meetings of the wardens and vestry. In churches of the Congregational order the minister has no legal right to attend the meetings of the governing board, and, in practice, is frequently not invited to do so. The lack of an established custom in this respect is frequently a cause of misunderstanding and friction, which could easily be obviated if the governing board would make a point of inviting the minister to sit with it habitually, without a vote, reserving only the right to meet without him or to suggest his withdrawal when the matters under consideration are of such nature as to make his presence embarrassing. Inasmuch as the minister will naturally hesitate himself to propose that he attend meetings of a board of which he is not a member, the board should take the initiative in this matter at the time of his settlement.

It is obviously of great advantage to the church that he should sit habitually with the governing board, for only so

can he keep adequately informed as to the financial condition and the business problems of the church, and find convenient opportunity to present matters which come to his attention and to offer suggestions as to the administration of the church. Even though he have no direct responsibility either for raising the income of the church or for its expenditures, he is nevertheless vitally concerned in its financial welfare and should be kept informed as to how things are going. It should also be recognized that the modern minister is increasingly an administrator, in active charge of various departments which call for an expenditure of money. Churches and ministers do, indeed, differ greatly among themselves in this respect. Some churches look after their business affairs without informing the minister of any details, regarding him as solely the spiritual leader. Others expect too much of him, placing upon his shoulders many details of parish administration to which the laymen, or a hired clerk, ought to attend. Neither attitude is commendable. The wise method is for the laymen to administer the temporalities of the parish, but to take the minister fully into their confidence, realizing that many a modern minister can give expert advice in this field, even as to methods of raising money.

It may often, indeed, prove that the minister will find that the business of the church needs a thorough overhauling. The constitution and by-laws may be out of date or not in accord with the requirements of the state law. The church may in practice ignore some of its own by-laws, resulting in doubt as to the proper admission of members, the accuracy of its voting list, and the validity of its actions at business meetings. A parish may run along placidly for decades using such improper methods, but behind them always lurks the possibility of a disrupting quarrel or of a lawsuit, and they are generally symptoms of a slow degeneration of the spiritual life. Efficient business management and careful observance of the legal requirements are not "unspiritual." On the contrary, they generally indicate a healthy religious condition, for they mean that the intelligent leaders in the parish, instead of holding an attitude of amiable indifference, are taking an active inter-

est in its work. It is a noteworthy fact that the monasteries of the Middle Ages were doing their best service for the community in those periods when their business administration was most efficient.

When, therefore, the minister finds himself settled in a parish which is badly run on the business side, it is his duty as well as his right to propose such new methods as have proved successful elsewhere, and the laymen, instead of resenting such action as interference, ought to welcome such information and advice as he can give them. The minister's success professionally is in a certain degree measurable by the growth of his church. To judge his value by the increase or decline of its membership or its income is, indeed, a very crude test, and sometimes a most unfair one. A church may be declining both in members and in income because of circumstances over which the minister has no control, or, on the other hand, wide popularity may attend a ministry which is thin and poor spiritually. Yet it is undeniably a fact that strong, vigorous leadership in moral and spiritual things will generally manifest itself in the increasing strength and efficiency of the parish. Except where conditions are already unfavorable a decaying church is generally the result of a weak and ineffective ministry. Inasmuch, then, as his professional success is inevitably to some extent judged by the material prosperity of his church, it is no more than just that the minister should know the full details of its business management.

CHAPTER III

THE LEGAL ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

State and church in the United States.

In the United States the establishment of any church as the religion of the state is forbidden in the Federal Constitution. In several of the colonies, however, which preceded the present Union, one or another form of church organization did receive some measure of official recognition and of support from taxation, although the laws governing the church establishment in England did not generally extend to the colonies. Massachusetts offers a conspicuous example of close connection between church and state, for the Colony of Massachusetts Bay was organized on a frankly theocratic basis. Originally church membership was the basis for the franchise, until the charter granted by William and Mary substituted a property qualification therefor. In 1692 the General Court passed a law requiring each town to provide for the maintenance of an "able, learned, orthodox minister or ministers of good conversation." Curiously enough Boston was the only town in which the ministers were maintained by voluntary contributions. The churches thus maintained by public taxation were those of the Congregational order, and the religious history of the colony from the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century is marked by the constant struggle of Baptists, Quakers, and Episcopalians to obtain release from those taxes. Quakers were relieved from such taxation in 1731, Baptists in 1734, and Episcopalians in 1742, and all taxation in support of churches was abolished in 1833. Somewhat similar conditions, varying according to the local situation, prevailed in New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia.

So far as the Federal Government is concerned, church societies have always been regarded as private corporations, all being treated on an impartial and equal basis. The state does not recognize denominations as a whole as corporations, except in the case of the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines, under the terms of the Treaty of Paris. In the United States the Roman Church is a hierarchy, not a corporation.¹ So, also, the various Protestant bodies are not corporations as such, though their local churches and many organizations for denominational purposes are generally incorporated.

The state does not recognize canon law as having any jurisdiction where it comes into conflict with state law, though in other cases canon law or customary usage is taken into consideration as governing the action of churches. Any church, however, must obey the statutory law governing corporations, even when that law does not coincide with the canon law, for the charter under which it operates is binding upon it, though its own by-laws are also binding in so far as they are not contradictory to the provisions of the charter.

Almost all church societies are now incorporated. The exceptions are a limited number of old churches which go back to colonial times, antedating the existing laws, and a few churches informally organized as voluntary associations, the property of which is held in trust by one or more individuals or by some denominational body. While it is not obligatory upon a church to incorporate, it is very desirable that every new organization should do so, at least as soon as it has passed the tentative, experimental stage, and can look forward to some degree of permanence.

Types of church corporations ²:

(a) The territorial parish.

The English colonists who settled the Atlantic seaboard brought with them the conception of a parish as including a territorial area, the inhabitants of which were parish-

¹ Zollman, "American Civil Church Law," pp. 47-49.

² See Zollman, *op. cit.*, Chap. II.

ioners of the local church. Therefore both in New England and in some of the other seaboard colonies the original form of organization was that of the territorial parish supported by taxation. Ministers were elected by the voting members of the church in Massachusetts, and inasmuch "as church members only could become freemen and hence voters in town affairs, this was practically equivalent to the election of a minister by the town in those towns of the province which still had but one church."³ In such cases the parochial business was transacted at town meetings, any given meeting commonly being engaged with both parish and town affairs, carried out under the same forms of procedure.⁴ Where a church had settled a minister it was liable for his salary, even though there might be in the town other religious societies, the members of which might be exempted by law from contributing to his support.⁵

This ancient conception of the territorial parish as a legal organization has disappeared in New England, and probably everywhere else in this country, but traces of it are still to be found in the dual organization of church and parish which persists in some places. In this dual organization the church consists of persons who have been admitted to church membership and who have the right to call the minister; the parish consists of members of the congregation who have signed the parish-book and who control the temporal affairs of the establishment, but who also have the right to approve or reject the minister nominated by the church. This dual organization, which still prevails in a good many old New England churches, is a thoroughly undesirable one, leading to confusion, controversy and inefficiency, and should be done away with. It is often no easy matter to solve the legal tangle in which most churches so organized eventually find themselves, each case requiring special consideration and expert advice. A solution can be found in most cases, however, where there is good will and a sincere desire to reorganize the church on a modern basis.

³ Reed, "Church and State in Massachusetts."

⁴ Mass. Digest, Vol. VI, col. 12735.

⁵ Mass. Digest, Vol. VI, col. 12736.

Both competent legal counsel, and the advice of wise denominational officers, are essential.

(b) *The corporation sole.*

The corporation sole is a legal entity consisting of one person at a time who is vested with duties and privileges which pass to his successor when appointed—thus in England the king, as such, is a corporation sole.⁶ So, also, in England, clergymen in some instances may, by virtue of their position, be in possession of lands or property, and therefore corporations sole. The corporation sole in a modernized form is occasionally found in this country in cases where a minister may hold parsonage lands in fee simple, or in Episcopally organized churches in which a bishop may hold properties assigned to his use or control by virtue of his office. He may, for example, hold the title to the property of some particular local church. This would appear to be an undesirable arrangement, even in an autocratically governed church, save under quite exceptional circumstances.

(c) *The “trustee corporation.”*

In this form of corporation the body of trustees, as such, may be incorporated by special charter, or under a general statute. They then own and manage the property for the benefit of the church, though they need not be members of the church, or may even be excommunicated from it. Every contract of the society, to be legally binding on the corporation, must be made or ratified by the trustees, who thus have a veto power over the society's actions. This form of incorporation is often found in churches of Presbyterian organization. It tends to conservative management and to maintenance of the *status quo*, being rigid and inflexible. Where ministers complain of difficulties with church trustees they generally refer to churches thus organized.

(d) *The corporation aggregate.*

This is the commonest and simplest form of modern church incorporation, by which the title to whatever prop-

⁶ Zollman, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

erty the church possesses is vested in the whole body corporate. This body is composed of all those persons who have complied with the terms of membership, as defined in the statutes governing church bodies, or in the by-laws of the church society, which must not, however, conflict with the statute. In such corporations the officers of the society, though often called trustees, are not such legally, since they do not hold the property in trust for the society, but are in reality directors, like the directors of a bank, being merely the agents of the society. This is the most democratic form of church incorporation, and is best adapted to autonomous bodies.

The by-laws of the society.

The by-laws should be drawn in accord with the laws of the state in which the society is located. Where they do not agree the statutes prevail. Many churches operate under antiquated by-laws, or without due regard to their provisions. Such procedure is liable to end in disaster. Therefore every church should occasionally overhaul its by-laws, under legal advice, to make sure that they are adequate and in accord with the state law.

Church membership.

Membership in the church does not necessarily carry with it the right to vote. For example, some churches may admit to membership young people who are still minors and are therefore disqualified. On the other hand, in some churches persons who are not members may nevertheless have a vote, as in the case of pew-owners in a proprietary church—a thoroughly undesirable situation which should be rectified when opportunity permits.

Broadly speaking, however, membership carries with it the right to vote, providing certain conditions as to residence, church attendance, financial contribution, and acceptance into the membership of the church have been fulfilled. These conditions vary widely in different denominations and states, so that no universal rule can be laid down. The right to vote is governed by the church by-laws, and by statute law, which prevails in case of conflict.

Generally that right is limited to persons of full age, who have statedly worshiped with the church for one year next preceding the annual meeting of the society, and who have either regularly contributed to its financial support or been publicly received into its membership in the prescribed manner. Church officers should be acquainted with the law of the state in this matter, and the church by-laws should be amended, if necessary, to accord therewith. In view of the bitter controversies and the legal entanglements which may arise from disputes over the legality of a vote, it is of the first importance that the voting-lists of the church should be accurately kept up.

The by-laws should always contain a provision, in accord with the statute, for the dismissal and the expulsion of members. No person can be expelled from church membership without due notice being served upon him, or without an opportunity for a hearing. There must be adequate reasons for the proposed action. For example, mere failure to make financial contribution is not legal ground for expulsion.

The governing board of the church.⁷

The governing board of the church, whether known as wardens and vestry, board of trustees, prudential committee, standing committee, or by some other title, is elected by the voting members of the church, to whom it is responsible. The method of organizing such a governing board is sometimes prescribed, within wide limits, by statute, but is more generally determined by the by-laws of the church itself. The best form of organization is one which provides for a board of moderate size—not less than seven, or more than fifteen persons—elected at annual meetings of the society for limited terms, so that a part of the board goes out of office each year. The most convenient method is to divide the board into three groups, elected for three years each, so that one-third of the board goes out of office each year. Such an arrangement will secure sufficient continuity of policy and yet will offer opportunity for the annual infusion of new blood into the board. Both men

⁷ See Zollman, *op. cit.*, Chap. XIII.

and women should be eligible. Where the church is sufficiently large to provide a considerable number of suitable candidates for the board, provision may be made that no person shall be eligible for reelection until at least one year has elapsed after he has gone out of office. Such a provision greatly simplifies the problem of eliminating from the board members who have become superannuated, or whom, for one or another reason, it is desirable to supersede.

The board is charged with the management of the church property. The amount of real estate and of endowment funds which the church may hold is generally limited by law. In some states, in which the amounts were fixed many years ago, there are no doubt many churches which today actually do hold lands or endowments much in excess of the legal limits. In such states legislation should be sought to fix new limits which will meet the needs of modern society. In law every religious society is a "charity," holding its property for the benefit of the community. If it is disbanded the property may not be divided among the church members, but is subject to disposition by court action. The board should hold regularly called meetings for the transaction of its business, at least as often as once a quarter, preferably every month, except during vacation periods. It cannot properly transact business at informal or impromptu meetings, except in emergencies, in which cases its action should be formally ratified at its next regular meeting. The board should also keep a full record of its proceedings, and it must be prepared to report its doings to the society for which it acts.

The board may "bind the body upon all contracts within the scope of its corporate powers,"⁸ but if it goes beyond those powers the individual members of the board become responsible for the contract. It has power to transact the ordinary business of the church, but the authority to call or dismiss a minister, and to fix his salary, rests with the society, nor can the board authorize any extraordinary expenditures without vote of the society. It is highly important that the board should carefully conform to the

⁸ Zollman, *op. cit.*, p. 375.

requirements of the statutes and the church by-laws governing its action that it may avoid any shadow of illegality on its proceedings.

The church officers.

These usually include the chairman and secretary of the board, and the treasurer of the church. They may be elected by the society itself, generally for a one-year-term, or the by-laws may provide that the board, after its election by the society, shall choose its officers for the year from among its members. They have the usual duties of such officers, and are responsible also for the preservation of order at religious services and at business meetings, with authority to remove offenders against good order, though they may use no greater force than is necessary for the purpose. It is obvious that they should be representative men and women in whom the parish has confidence. When the secretary and treasurer are satisfactory, it is advantageous to have them serve for considerable periods, but the practice of an indefinite term of office is so undesirable that it is wise to adopt a by-law providing for a slow rotation of office, even though that means that occasionally some particularly valuable officer becomes ineligible for reëlection. Otherwise there is always danger that some person will hold on to his post year after year, although the welfare of the church calls for his retirement. To get rid of such a person without a controlling by-law is always a delicate and difficult matter.

It is better that the treasurer should be bonded, even though this involves some inconvenience. It is essential that he be a man of thorough probity, acquainted with accounting methods, but the men who are themselves in charge of large business affairs do not necessarily make the best church treasurers. The church business is likely to seem a small matter to them, to be handed over to a clerk to look after in his spare time. A man in a small business, if he be conscientious and painstaking, is more likely to prove efficient. In a considerable church the treasurer should have an allowance for clerk hire; in a very large church he may be a salaried officer.

The conduct of parish meetings.

It is essential that all business meetings of the society, whether the annual meeting or those called for some special purpose, should be conducted in accordance with both the statutes governing church corporations and the by-laws of the society itself. First of all, a legal call for the meeting must be issued, in due season, to all voting members, by notice posted in the prescribed form at the church door, or sent through the mails, as may be required. Such notice must state the business to be brought before the meeting. It is the duty of the secretary to see that such notice is properly given. "Objection to the invalidity of a call may not, however, be made by an outsider, nor by a member of the society except at the time of the meeting."⁹

Second, the secretary should have at the meeting an accurate list of all persons entitled to vote, so that a prompt decision may be made if the right of any voter is challenged, but it is not necessary that this list should be read at the beginning of the meeting, as under ordinary circumstances no question as to the vote is likely to arise.

In the third place, the parish meeting must be conducted by the chairman with due regard to parliamentary law. Motions must be properly made, seconded, and put to the vote. Except in matters where there is general accord the chairman should require the motion to be put in writing and should have it read aloud before the vote is taken. A strict adherence to rules requires the minutes to be written out and read to the meeting before adjournment, but this is ordinarily dispensed with when there is full confidence in the secretary and no serious dispute in the transaction of business. If the meeting, however, has been much divided, such approval of the minutes before the meeting adjourns may prevent a later controversy as to their accuracy.

⁹ Zollman, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

. CHAPTER IV

THE WORKING ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

The church's field of service.

The work of most churches may conveniently be divided into seven fields, namely, the conduct of worship, religious education, pastoral care, missionary interests, community service, social activities, and business administration. The degree of emphasis on these several activities will vary greatly in different parishes, but each activity is represented in some degree in every church which is fulfilling all its normal functions. The conduct of worship is, of course, the primary function of the church, upon which all its other activities depend, and without which it soon ceases to be a church at all. The business administration of the church exists only to sustain and make possible the other activities. The most successful church is not necessarily that which has the largest membership or commands most wealth, but rather that in which all these several fields of service are so thoroughly organized and interrelated that the members constitute a harmonious working fellowship for the promotion of the moral and spiritual welfare of the community.

The minister as directing head.

The minister has primary responsibility for the conduct of worship, the pastoral duties, and such religious education as the church undertakes. But he is also the general administrative head of the whole enterprise, with responsibility for framing the policies to be pursued and for persuading the governing board and the society to adopt them. With some exceptions, he must also recruit the working staff of the church, though in certain cases he must

secure the assent of other persons. The exceptions are the employment of the sexton, who is usually engaged by the grounds and buildings committee, and the organist and choir, who are usually engaged by the music committee, in both cases subject to the approval of the governing board. The minister should, however, also be consulted, to make sure that the candidates for these positions are acceptable to him. The minister has no power definitely to engage any other paid worker for the church, such as an office secretary, Sunday-School teacher, parish assistant, or assistant minister, unless specially authorized to act as agent for the governing board, but it is customary for him to select such assistants, subject to the approval of the board. In the selection of volunteer workers he is usually given a free hand, and often must act on his own initiative if he is to get any helpers at all, but if he is wise he will consult in advance either the officers of the church or the standing committee which has charge of each particular field of work. Thus in choosing his Sunday-School teachers he ought, if only as a matter of courtesy, to consult the Sunday-School committee before making appointments.

So far as possible the minister should be relieved from the burden of detailed administrative chores, which should be turned over to the various parish committees or to a salaried staff. Most Protestant churches in this country are still run on a one-man basis inherited from a very simple social order, the minister being expected to fulfill single-handed the offices of preacher, pastor, and administrator. That was possible for the minister in the village or country life of seventeenth-century England, such as is described in Baxter's "Reformed Pastor" or Herbert's "Country Parson," or such as prevailed in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century in this country. But the modern social order is immensely more complex, geared to a far higher speed, imposing indefinitely heavier burdens upon the minister. Very few men can regularly preach well, keep in constant touch with their whole parish as counselor and friend, and also be thoroughly efficient in administration, if loaded down with petty details.

A church must take its choice. If it wants good preach-

ing and faithful pastoral service it must give its minister time for reading and thought, and for unhurried, friendly intercourse with his people. To that end it must relieve him, so far as possible, from the drudgery that an office clerk could do as well, or better. To leave him to keep up the church records and files, to write his correspondence and his sermons with his own hand, to lay out all the church work unaided, is very poor economy, since it means wasting the time of a trained expert. The minister in a country parish may have the time for such details, and it may be impossible to secure for him any paid assistance, but that ought not to be the case in any moderate-sized town, much less in a considerable city. Even in a town of a few thousand people the grocer or the dry-goods merchant will employ several clerks, but the grocer's and the merchant's minister, with a parish of several hundred souls, will be left to carry his burden unassisted. The most modest lawyer's office has at least a stenographer to write letters and to answer the telephone. The lawyer does not dream of writing out his briefs with his own hand, but dictates them, corrects the drafts and has them retyped for him. Yet often the lawyer cannot see why the minister should need a stenographer, though he has perhaps as much correspondence to keep up, and could save a great deal of valuable time by learning to dictate his sermons, to be rewritten in a fair copy after revision.

This shortsighted and antiquated policy is at least a partial explanation of the lamentable inefficiency of many Protestant churches. The minister is compelled to work with eighteenth-century tools instead of being given a twentieth-century equipment. Roman Catholic parishes offer a suggestive contrast. A single example, recently called to the writer's attention, will suffice. In a certain New England town stands the First Church, a fine old meeting-house capable of seating several hundred people. The building is open on Sundays only, and, except for the sexton and the organist, the minister carries on the work alone, save for volunteer assistance. But the Roman Catholic church in the next block has a staff of twenty-seven paid workers, who keep the church constantly in full activity.

It is like a ship fully manned; able to take advantage of every wind and tide, whereas the Protestant church is like a vessel which must slowly pick its way under shortened sail because its crew is too small properly to work the ship.

The paid staff.

Every minister in such a church should be provided with an office secretary—a stenographer to attend to the correspondence and the files—and a parish assistant, whose primary business is to take charge of the Sunday-School, under the minister's direction, and to do much of the other administrative work of the church. In a larger church there will also be more than one minister. The work should be carefully divided among them, each having a permanent and distinct field with no overlapping, and the clergy staff should be regarded as partners associated in a common enterprise, the senior minister being the directing head, rather than the employer of a group of office boys.¹

Volunteer workers.

In any church, however, much of the work will inevitably fall to volunteer workers, and this is right, for such work is one of their opportunities for Christian service. The minister will ordinarily select the personnel, seek to inspire them with his ideals, and strive to hold them to a faithful performance of their duties. It is often difficult to persuade the right people to serve, and volunteers are more difficult to control and direct, even when they are thoroughly conscientious, since they feel more free to absent themselves from duty, more easily take offense than do paid employees, and, even with the best intentions, lack the technique of the trained worker. Success with them lies in developing *esprit de corps*, pride in their work, and a realization of their value to the church.

¹ See "The Administration of an Institutional Church," Hodges and Reichert, section on The Staff, pp. 3-12, for a description of the duties of assistant clergy in a highly organized church.

The standing committees.

In most churches, besides the governing board, there will be certain standing committees, elected annually by the parish. These are likely to be a committee on grounds and buildings,² a music committee,³ a committee on benevolences and missions, a membership committee, a social-service committee, a Sunday-School committee, and a hospitality or visiting committee.⁴ Care should be taken to define clearly the work and authority of all committees, so that they shall not overlap. As many different people as possible should be enlisted for service, so that no one person shall be overloaded. All committees should be expected to report in writing at the annual meeting of the parish. There will probably also be separate organizations of the women, the men, and the young people. It is not advisable for the minister to be on all these committees, though he may sit with them when occasion arises, but he should always be a member of the committees on membership, benevolence, and the Sunday-School, and perhaps on social service.

The young people should be drafted into service as rapidly as possible, first to usher or take the collection or to look after the flowers on the pulpit; then into the Sunday-School as teachers, and as members of the various committees. From the committees the most valuable workers can be drafted on to the governing board. Both the board and the committees should be representative of the church as a whole, and by rotation of office new and young blood should be annually infused into the organization.

The educational work of the church.

The church must always exercise a teaching function, both from the pulpit and in the Sunday-School. In a small church the minister may have to take charge of the church school, but this should be avoided when possible. If the school comes immediately before the morning service, the minister enters the pulpit having already expended his first

² See pp. 63-65, 91-92.

³ See Chap. XI.

⁴ See Chap. XIII.

strength and freshness; if it follows the service he must hurry from the pulpit to the Sunday-School room, with scant time to see people who want to talk with him. Therefore, the Sunday-School should be run by the parish assistant, or by some other person as superintendent, though the minister will do well to take part occasionally, if not habitually, in either the opening or the closing service, and he should teach the senior class of boys and girls, at least as they approach the time of confirmation. This is an opportunity which he should never willingly relinquish to others. He should also take charge of the week-night teachers' meeting for instruction and counsel, and should confer frequently with the parish assistant regarding problems which arise.

The social life of the church.

No church should ever be thought of as an ecclesiastical club, where people of one social group gather for the satisfaction of their own souls, but rather as a household of faith, where young and old, rich and poor, people of many varied walks in life, come together for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God. It is easier to bring about religious fellowship than social intermingling in such a varied group, especially in large cities, where many people find their social life entirely outside of the churches. Nevertheless the social life of the church may mean much not only to the lonely stranger but to long-established members of the church. The hospitality or visiting committee should be active in welcoming newcomers. Parish suppers, church fairs, club gatherings, young people's dances or dramatic performances, where permitted, should be utilized for the incorporation of newcomers into the life of the church. All such occasions should be managed with complete disregard of social distinctions or class lines, which have no place in church life. To that end it is better to have the social gatherings of the parish in the parish house, or in the parsonage if its accommodations permit, rather than at the private house of some wealthy parishioner, to which the poorer people of the parish may hesitate to go, feeling that they do not belong to the owner's "social set." In every

case care should be taken to avoid the impression that the aim is merely to have a good time, the true purpose being to serve some end in the church life.

Social service.

The church itself may not be engaged directly in any form of organized social service for the community, but it is bound to make an indirect contribution thereto, through the activities of some of its members, and should be kept informed of the work of social-welfare agencies in the community. The social-service committee should therefore include such members of the church as are best informed upon these matters, so that it may serve as a medium of communication between the church and the community.

The part which the minister takes in such matters will depend greatly upon his capacities and interests, as well as upon local conditions. An able and public-spirited minister, especially if long settled, will often become a counselor-at-large to the community, in which nothing of public importance will be done without his knowledge and advice. This is an enviable position for him to occupy, with large possibilities of public service. Such general use of his influence is wiser than an undue expenditure of his time and strength upon the details of particular forms of community work. He may profitably give the initiatory impulse to many a helpful activity, but he will do well to transfer the active management to other hands at an early date.

The parish as a coöperative enterprise.

In the ideal parish every member will feel his responsibility for the welfare of his church, and will make what contribution he can towards its corporate life. Every member should give according to his means, no matter how small, but the full privileges of the church life should be equally open to all members regardless of the size of their respective contributions. He should also bear in mind his obligation to give of his time and service, as well as of means, and should count habitual attendance at worship as part of such contribution.

Coöperation with the minister is also essential to the

success of the enterprise. When a new minister comes the members can, if they will, do much to introduce him properly to the community by seeing that he has opportunities to appear or to speak at public meetings. They should publicly give their moral support to the work which their church is doing. They should keep the minister informed as to the names and addresses of newcomers on whom he should call; of cases of illness, accident, or misfortune among his parishioners, instead of leaving him to learn of them in roundabout ways; and they should notify him promptly of changes of address, so that the parish lists may be kept up to date, and the minister saved perhaps miles of walking to call upon people who have moved without leaving an address behind. The parish which remembers to do all these things has attained to an efficient organization.

CHAPTER V

THE PARISH RECORDS

The value of parish records.

The parish registers of the Church of England originated from an order promulgated in the thirtieth year of Henry VIII, 1538, requiring churches to keep a register of baptisms. When Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558 the order was reaffirmed, and the registers were made to include marriages and burials as well. Canon 70, of the canons of the Church of England, in 1603 laid down a still more detailed rule on the subject, modified in detail only since that date. Most old parishes in England, therefore, possess registers of baptisms, marriages and burials going back to the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. These English parish registers are of incalculable historic and legal value. To take but one example: we should probably be ignorant of the date of William Shakespeare's birth were it not for the register of the parish church at Stratford-on-Avon, which contains the record of his baptism on April 26, 1564. As it was the custom at that time to baptize children when they were about three days old his birth is commonly reckoned as occurring on April 23, 1564. In this country the registration of marriages is included in the town or county records, as are now also the registrations of births and deaths in the better organized communities, so that the legal importance of church records at the present day is much less than was the case in England. Nevertheless occasions not infrequently arise when the evidence which they have to offer is of legal value, and, in the case of our older churches, the records often contain information for historians and genealogists which cannot elsewhere be found.

The records of the trustees and of the business meetings of the church, and the lists of voting members, are of even greater importance for the legal organization of the church and in securing title to its property. In spite of this fact there are few matters of parish administration about which the average Protestant church is more lax and careless than in the proper keeping of its records. Especially is this the case where there is no centralized authority in the person of a bishop to put pressure upon the minister or the church officers to fulfill their duty in this matter. In the Roman Catholic Church the priest is under obligation to keep in a safe place the registers of baptisms, marriages, confirmations and funerals conducted in his parish church, as well as a complete collection of all the documents relating to the church or mission and a file of all pastorals and other communications coming from his bishop, and neglect of this duty is certain to call forth censure when the bishop makes his visitation. In most Protestant bodies, however, the responsibility for the proper keeping of records rests wholly upon the individual parish. If the church officers are careless valuable records are liable to be lost. If the minister is negligent the parish registers are liable to fall into arrears, though the fact may not come to light for years. Often old and important churches will show bad gaps in their records, especially in the registers of christenings, marriages, and funerals. Generally such gaps occur between pastorates, but every now and then there is a minister who simply neglects to enter such services in the books, perhaps over a period of several years, and who dies or goes away leaving behind him this sin of omission to testify to future generations as to his neglect of duty.

The records as church property.

All the parish records are the property of the church, except the minister's private record book, which will be discussed hereafter. The minister and church officers should realize that they hold these books in trust, and that they are under obligation to keep them in a safe place, and to see that all entries are promptly and accurately made. The books or files should not be left in the hands of

irresponsible individuals, or stored in private houses, or in business offices. There are many instances of the loss of valuable records belonging to historic churches which have been left in the keeping of some private individual, and which, after his death, have been lost through the ignorance or carelessness of his heirs. Old records which are historically valuable and which cannot be replaced should be kept in a fireproof safe or deposited in the town library or other accessible place, instead of being dumped into a trunk in some out-of-the-way corner in the church basement. Current records should be kept either in the church office, if there be one, or in the minister's study, or in the possession of the church officer who for the time being is responsible for them, but their whereabouts should always be known to more than one person. Neither the minister nor church officers should retain the parish record books or files after ceasing to hold office, but should see that they are deposited in safe hands to be turned over to their successors in office. Inasmuch as these records are church property, the church should, of course, meet the cost of the necessary equipment. Neither the minister nor an officer of the church should be expected to pay out of his own pocket for materials which are in fact as much a part of the equipment of the church as the hymn books or the heating plant. In some states the law requires that when a church is disbanded its records be deposited with the town clerk.

The materials needed.

The necessary record books should be made of a good, durable paper and substantially bound, and there should be a filing cabinet to hold books, documents and correspondence, and card catalogues for current parish lists. The following items will be necessary in most churches for the proper keeping of the records:

(a) A record book in which should be entered the record of all business meetings of the parish or society. If there be a dual organization, as in some old New England churches in which the "church" and the "parish," or the "proprietors" and the "society," meet separately, there

should be two books, one for each body, that the records may be kept separate.

(b) A record book for all meetings for the board of trustees, wardens and vestry, standing committee, or whatever else be the official designation of the governing board of the church.

(c) A book for the treasurer in which the church accounts should be kept.

(d) A record book or file for each permanent organization or standing committee within the parish, at least if it handles money. Thus the Sunday-School should have its own records of receipts and expenditures, attendance, etc.

(e) A register in which should be entered all baptisms, marriages, and funerals conducted in the church. In a large church in which such services are very frequent it is often better to have three different books. Some churches use printed forms, mounted in blocks, for these special services, either of their own devising, or procured from a denominational publishing house. Where such forms are used they may be treated as permanent records by being pasted into a book arranged for that purpose, but it is better to regard them merely as temporary memoranda and to transfer the entries in chronological order to blank books, taking care to use a good ink which will not fade. It is important that the record should give all the necessary information, and it is, therefore, desirable that a standard form be used. In the "Administration of an Institutional Church"¹ there is a detailed description of the way in which the registers of St. George's Church in New York have been kept. Few churches, perhaps, can imitate St. George's in the care with which its administration has been worked out, but the following forms, based upon those used in St. George's Church, should be used in the keeping of the records of any church. The standard form for the baptismal record should be as follows:

¹ Hodges and Reichert, *op. cit.*, Chap. III.

BAPTISMAL RECORD

Full name of person baptized
 Names of parents
 Residence
 Names of sponsors
 Date and place of birth
 Date and place of baptism
 Officiating clergyman

When the entry is transferred to the record book it will read as follows:

Baptized: William Smith, eldest child of George and Susanna (Jones) Smith of 1919 Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago, Ill.; sponsors, Abraham Smith and Sarah Jones. Born, Chicago, Ill., July 4, 1917, baptized Aug. 21, 1917, All Souls' Church, Canterbury, Mich.

(Signed) JOHN DOE, *Minister*.

The following is the form for a marriage record:

MARRIAGE RECORD

Full name, age, color and address of bridegroom

 Full name, age, color and address of bride

Bridegroom { bachelor
 divorced
 widower

Bride { spinster
 widow
 divorced

Date of marriage
 Place of marriage
 Intended residence of married couple
 Officiating minister

When the entry is transferred it will read as follows:

Married: George Smith (42, widower, white), of Chicago, Ill., and Susanna Jones (24, spinster, white), of Canterbury, Mich., on May 25, 1916, in All Souls' Church, Canterbury, Mich. Future residence, 1919 Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago, Ill.

(Signed) JOHN DOE, *Minister*.

The following is the form for a funeral record:

FUNERAL RECORD

Full name of deceased
Residence
Date and place of death
Cause of death
Date and place of funeral service
Place of {burial
 {cremation
Undertaker
Officiating clergyman

When the entry is transferred it will read as follows:

Funeral: George Smith, of 115 Euclid Avenue, Canterbury, Mich., d. Jan. 1, 1922, age 47 years, 6 mos., of pneumonia, at Chicago. Funeral at his residence; burial in All Souls' Cemetery, Jan. 3, 1922; Jeremiah Graves, undertaker.

(Signed) JOHN DOE, Minister.

All such services, when conducted within the church, should be entered in the registers, and services for persons connected with the parish even when they take place at a private house. The minister may use his discretion about including in the parish registers services which he performs for strangers at other places, as, for example, when he is away on his vacation. He should, of course, make entries of these services also in his private record book, but they are not properly a part of the parish records. In case of doubt, however, it is better for him to err upon the side of inclusiveness, and to enter the items in the parish registers.

It is important that all entries should be made promptly, at the time of the service. Otherwise, the minister is liable to find it very difficult to obtain the information which he should have. He should never content himself with jotting down a memorandum of the service and thrusting it into his pocket or dropping it into a drawer to be entered later when a number of such items have collected. Loose memoranda have a way of disappearing, or the min-

ister may die suddenly, or remove at short notice to another locality without having time to make his entries. It takes but a few moments to enter each service as it occurs, but it is a long and tedious task to write up records when they fall into arrears for many weeks or months.

Many persons like to have signed certificates of their marriage, or of the christening of their children. Such certificates have now no legal value, but the custom of giving them is a pleasant one. If the minister uses them he should avoid the cheap, sentimental forms decorated with cherubs, doves, or wedding bells, in favor of a simple and dignified engraved form.

(f) There should be a family record, in which should be entered detailed information about each family or individual belonging to the church. Some denominational publishing houses print loose-leaf forms for such family records, or have large filing cards of standard size. The use of such movable cards or leaves is better for this purpose than a bound book, since it more readily permits of the unceasing revision which the family record requires. When an individual dies, or a family removes to another community, the leaf or card can be taken out of the record and filed among the permanent archives. It should not, of course, be destroyed, but filed where it can be found if later reference to it is necessary. This record of families and individuals belonging to the church is for the use and information of the minister and the parish assistant, and should not be open to general inspection. It will prove of great assistance to the minister in keeping track of his people, and is invaluable to a new minister when he takes charge of the church. From this record the minister can easily make up, at the end of each year, his report of deaths, withdrawals or accessions. Needless to say, its value largely depends upon its being kept up to date.

(g) Another form of record useful to a minister in a busy and active parish, though not essential to good administration, is a calendar of the church year, in which are filed memoranda relating to parish activities—dates for trustees' meetings, church suppers, special collections, special services, notes as to sermon themes, Scripture read-

ings and hymns appropriate to the varying seasons of the church year. Such a file must be gradually built up, but will eventually be valuable as a labor-saving device to the minister in planning his work in advance.²

(h) A scrapbook will be found useful for the preservation of fugitive items—church calendars, programs, newspaper clippings, and other material otherwise easily lost. Every piece of printed matter issued by the church should be thus preserved. Each item should be corrected when it is entered, if it contains erroneous statements.

(i) Two card catalogues should be provided, preferably in a two-drawer filing box, which should contain in one drawer a mailing list with the names of all the persons connected with the parish, filed in alphabetical order, and in the other a calling list for the minister, in which the names of all persons in the parish are filed by the streets on which they live. Cards of different colors may be used in these card catalogues to indicate the various relationships which the persons entered bear to the church. Thus members of the church may be entered on white cards, regular attendants who are not members on buff cards, and “prospects” on blue cards. These mailing and calling lists must, of course, be constantly revised and kept up to date. The burden of this work will almost inevitably fall upon the minister of a small church, though sometimes a reliable volunteer may relieve him of this task. Where there is an assistant minister, a parish assistant, or an office secretary the work can be properly assigned to such person. The record of parish calls made should be entered on the backs of the cards in the calling list.

It may seem that undue emphasis has been laid upon the number and importance of these various forms of record, but a somewhat wide and varied experience has led the writer to believe that many ministers are grossly negligent, and many church officers both ignorant and careless in this matter. Both the minister and the church officers should recognize that the proper keeping of the

² See “The Administration of an Institutional Church,” pp. 86-97, for such a record of hymns used throughout the year in St. George’s Church, New York.

parish records is a duty of primary importance, vitally connected with the efficient management of the church. Slackness or slovenliness here is the clearest evidence of a negligent and half-hearted ministry, yet it is all too common.

The minister's personal records.

In addition to the records which are the property of the parish, and which the minister is not at liberty to take away, even temporarily, the minister will do well to keep his own private record of his professional service. This private record should contain a complete list of his sermons, and a record of the special services which he performs—baptisms, confirmations, marriages, funerals—and of his participation in such services as ordinations and installations. One large, well-bound blank book of good paper will be sufficient. He may enter at one end a list of all his sermons, giving each a number and entering against that number the text and subject, and the place, date and occasion on which it was preached. At the other end of the book his entries should run chronologically. Against the first date he will set the number of the sermon used and the place where it was preached, together with any other items that he may wish to record, and his succeeding engagements in due order, including all the special services which he performs. The book will thus contain at one end a record of his professional service and at the other a record of his sermons. It will prove of great interest to him personally as he goes on in life, and, if, after his death, the book is incorporated in the archives of the church which he has served, it may have a real historic value. It is astonishing, for example, how much information can be derived from the preaching records of the Puritan ministers in New England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Furthermore, if the minister has been negligent in keeping up the parish registers, his neglect can sometimes be made good by copying the items from his private record.

In addition to this preaching record the wise minister will also file carefully the manuscript or notes of each sermon after he has preached it, unless, indeed, when he

looks at it on Monday morning he is so disgusted with its inadequacy that his self-respect requires him to destroy it immediately! If he files it, however, he should note upon it the date and place of preaching, with any other memoranda which he may think desirable, and include references to the Scripture and the hymns used in connection with it, and perhaps an outline of his prayer, if it was framed especially to fit the discourse. The time may come when he will wish to use that sermon, or parts of it, again, and these memoranda, which take but a few moments to put down, are likely later on to save him much time. A convenient way to preserve sermons is to use brown manila envelopes, upon which the minister can write his name and address, the subject and text of the sermon and the dates and places of its delivery. A vertical correspondence filing cabinet offers the best way for filing sermons and sermon materials.

In addition to this private record of his professional services, which every minister should keep scrupulously, many ministers like also to keep a private file of documents, programs of occasions in which they take part, and newspaper clippings referring to themselves or their churches. A scrapbook into which such items are pasted in chronological order is a convenient method of keeping such items, or they may be filed in the filing cabinet.

CHAPTER VI

THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

The grounds and buildings committee.

The church grounds and buildings, including the house of worship, the parish house, and the parsonage, should be under the supervision of a committee of three or more persons, including at least one member of the governing board, and one or more women. In the case of a church with a considerable establishment a large committee may appropriately be divided into subcommittees having charge respectively of the church, the parish house, and the parsonage. The committee should have jurisdiction over the sexton and other persons who may be employed to look after the grounds and buildings. It should see that the buildings are properly heated and lighted, and are kept in good order; that the hymn books, service books and other equipment are adequate in number and serviceable in condition, and should carry out all necessary minor repairs, under authority from the trustees or governing body.

It is important that the grounds and buildings should present an attractive external appearance. A church is a semi-public institution, and the community has a right to expect that the property shall not be left in a shabby or untidy condition. Furthermore, a slovenly appearance always conveys the impression that a church is running down, and hence is very detrimental to its welfare. Therefore external repairs, such as painting, replacing broken windows, or renewing dilapidated woodwork, should be promptly made. The grass should be trimmed frequently, and vines and shrubbery planted to make an attractive appearance. In localities where there is much

snow in winter care should be taken that the sidewalks are promptly cleaned, or sanded in icy weather. Many churches are notoriously lacking in public spirit in this matter.

The committee should also make certain that the sexton does his duty in the matter of keeping the interior of the church and parish house clean and neat. He should collect and destroy each week any printed papers, such as church calendars, which may have been distributed in the pews, but which are now out of date. The Sunday-School rooms ought to be cleared immediately after using, the chairs rearranged and blackboards cleaned. The sexton should also be instructed as to airing the church and parish house both before and after their use by any considerable number of people. It is important that the church should be thoroughly aired just before the congregation assembles for worship, even in very cold weather. It is better for the church to be a little too cold at the opening of worship rather than too hot, since it will soon warm up after the people gather. Close, warm air in a church building is even more conducive to slumber on the part of the congregation than a long and prosy sermon.

The minister has no direct responsibility for any of these matters. They should be cared for by the committee without action on his part. It is not desirable that he should be a member of the grounds and buildings committee, since he can easily call the attention of the committee to matters needing attention which come to his notice, but he is entitled to give instructions to the sexton as to the fulfillment of his duties. The one exception to his freedom from this responsibility is that he should himself supervise the care of the pulpit, reading desk, communion table and other equipment in the chancel of the church. He should see that old notices, memoranda, dilapidated service books and other trash are not allowed to accumulate in the recesses of the pulpit, that tumblers half filled with stale water do not stand there from week end to week end, and that the books, utensils and furniture which he uses in the conduct of worship are kept in good order. The chancel of the church ought above all places to be clean

and neat, and a half-concealed disorder here is the clearest proof of a slovenly minister.¹

When new church buildings are planned.

Under ordinary circumstances the minister simply accepts the building and equipment of which he finds the parish already in possession when he is installed as minister, though he may find it desirable to ask for some minor alterations or adjustments of the chancel furniture to suit his convenience. The time may come, however, when the parish will wish to make extensive alterations or to erect new buildings. When such a move is in contemplation it is important that the minister should remember that the matter is one which affects the whole parish, and for which he does not have any direct responsibility. The church is not his property, but that of the parish, which has to pay the bills for construction and maintenance and which will use it after he has gone to another parish or to his grave. He should, therefore, scrupulously refrain from any insistence that the parish shall build thus and so to please his taste.

When building operations are in prospect a representative committee should be appointed at a legally held parish meeting. The committee should be so strong and so truly representative of the whole congregation that it can

¹“Of all the material abominations of Christendom none is more outrageous than a dirty altar and a dirty sanctuary, except it be a dirty minister.” DeWitt. “Decently and in Order,” p. 33.

So also George Herbert, in “The Country Parson,” Chap. XIII: “The Country Parson hath a special care of his church, that all things there be decent, and befitting His name by which it is called. Therefore, first he takes order, that all things be in good repair; as walls plastered, windows glazed, floor paved, seats whole, firm, and uniform, especially that the pulpit, and desk, and communion table, and font be as they ought, for those great duties that are performed in them. Secondly, that the church be swept, and kept clean without dust, or cobwebs, and at great festivals strewed, and stuck with boughs, and perfumed with incense. Thirdly, that there be fit and proper texts of Scripture everywhere painted, and that all the painting be grave, and reverend, not with light colours or foolish antics. Fourthly, that all the books appointed by authority be there, and those not torn, or fouled, but whole and clean, and well bound.”

successfully meet the danger of being dominated by any single individual. Not infrequently some aggressive and domineering member of a building committee—often a man of large means, accustomed to having his own way—will try to force through the acceptance of plans which the parish does not really like, perhaps by threatening to withhold his contribution if the new church is not built to suit his taste. Many a parish has been saddled with an inferior or unsuitable, though costly church building, by some individual of this type, for the taste of such a man is almost certain to be untrained and his judgment bad, except as to the cost of materials and labor.

The building committee should first estimate as closely as possible the amount of money which they will have to spend. They should then secure tentative plans and estimates falling within the available amount and re-submit them to the parish before any contracts are let. The minister should not be a member of the building committee. Not infrequently wide differences of opinion will develop within the committee or the parish as to the architect to be employed or the style of architecture to be adopted. If the minister is a member of the committee he will find it difficult to avoid taking sides, although he ought not to do so, since he is minister of the whole parish. If he is not a member of the committee he can more easily maintain an appropriate attitude of neutrality.

It is, however, a mistake for the building committee not to consult the minister frequently about its plans, or perhaps ask him to sit with it unofficially. The primary purpose of the church is that it should serve as a house of worship. The minister is—or is supposed to be—an expert in the conduct of worship. He knows better than any one else what are the most convenient and practicable arrangements in such matters as the location and construction of pulpit and reading desk and the best means of access to the chancel from the minister's study or from the body of the church. He must preach in the church, and is vitally concerned that it should have good acoustic properties. For the parish to build a new church without consulting the minister on these points is as unintelligent as

it would be for the board of trustees of a library to put up a new building without consulting the librarian as to the practical arrangements necessary for the administration thereof. This is the more important because many architects have had small training or experience in planning churches and often are surprisingly ignorant as to what is required. An architect will sometimes plan a church with no way for the minister to reach the pulpit save by walking up the broad aisle; or will try to put the organ into a space not more than half large enough to hold it; or will plan a chancel so dark that the minister cannot use either reading desk or pulpit without artificial light, and then try to remedy the defect by putting a skylight into the roof above the chancel, where it is a grotesque eyesore.

Selecting the church architect.

Church building is a highly specialized form of architecture, for which the architect needs both thorough training and a sympathetic appreciation of the function of the church. He must understand the particular type of worship which the church building is intended to shelter. The architects of the marvelous cathedrals and the lovely parish churches of the Middle Ages were men in religious orders, monks or priests who had dedicated their talents to the service of the church, who were thoroughly conversant with its dogmas and symbolism, and deeply imbued with its spirit. One cannot expect to get a satisfactory modern church building from a young and inexperienced architect who never steps inside a church from one year's end to another, and who has only the haziest notion as to what the service is about.

The building committee ought, therefore, to be particularly careful in selecting an architect. They should not employ any one simply because he happens to belong to a family prominently connected with the church, or because it is good politics to favor this or that firm. Neither should they give the job to a local contractor not competent to do more than put up a building from some plan bought from a commercial house. A good professional architect is well worth the price of his fees. Inasmuch, however, as every

church should be carefully adapted to the type of worship which it is intended to house it is often well to employ an architect who is either a member of the denomination to which the church belongs, or who has at least built other successful churches of the same type. The primary duty of the committee is to pick out the man who is most likely to produce a satisfactory building within the prescribed cost. That does not necessarily mean choosing an architect with the most resounding reputation. A firm of young, well-trained men, who have their reputation still to make, may be just as competent to do a good job.

It is desirable that the architect be chosen and consulted about plans at the earliest possible stage in the proceedings. Often he can give useful advice about the choice of a site, since he can better visualize the church which is to be than most other people are able to. The building committee should be reasonable in their demands upon him, and not expect him to work the miracle of producing a \$100,000 church when they give him only \$50,000 to work with. A conscientious architect who is entirely frank with his clients about costs is much more satisfactory in the end than one who leads them on by glowing pictures to a heavy over-expenditure. The committee should, therefore, begin by stating explicitly the amount which is available, and the kind of building which the church needs, and should thereafter be guided largely by his advice as to the best way of securing the desired results. The architect's advice should also be sought as to the contractor to be employed. He is probably well acquainted with the several bidders for the contract, and knows which are the most honest and reliable. It is hardly fair to hold an architect responsible for results if the committee insists upon giving the contract to builders whom the architect cannot trust to do a good job. Contracts, therefore, should never be assigned as a matter of favor, nor necessarily given to the lowest bidder, at least if the bid is so low that it is clear that the builder must scamp the job to make any profit.

It is seldom wise to invite a number of architects to enter a competition, except for a very large and important undertaking. Such a competition is expensive, since it

means the study and preparation of several sets of plans by a number of men, and the best architects generally will not enter one except when a great professional opportunity is at stake. Competitions are governed by a code established by the American Institute of Architects, to which application should be made for information.² Under ordinary circumstances it is better policy for the parish to invite the best architect whom it can find to submit for discussion a single, tentative set of drawings, out of which a thoroughly satisfactory plan may eventually be evolved.

The house of worship.

No church can be regarded as an architectural success unless both its exterior and its interior unmistakably proclaim it to be a house of worship. Whatever style of architecture be adopted the function and purpose of the building ought to be clearly indicated. In some denominations there was a marked tendency in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to secularize church buildings, with the mistaken idea that the unchurched could more easily be induced to enter a building which looked as though it might be a fire-engine house, or a badly designed public library, or a town hall erected by the local contractor. The result of that tendency has been to inflict upon parishes hideous buildings very badly adapted to their intended use. Their uninviting exteriors are pretentious shams, which deceive nobody; their interiors, with folding theater seats on a floor which slopes to a wide platform, savor of vaudeville, or, at best, of a lecture hall or concert room, and utterly lack the power to suggest or stimulate the spirit of worship. The theory which produced this type of building—that religion could be made attractive by the elimination of all its traditional settings—was a thoroughly mistaken one.

A church is primarily and essentially a building in which a congregation assembles to worship God. That worship can best be promoted by an edifice which, by its

² Address, The Secretary: American Institute of Architects, The Octagon, Washington, D. C.

silent dignity, communicates to all who enter it the spirit which it has been erected to house, and which offers the fewest suggestions of other and alien purposes. Beauty should, of course, be sought for, but it will most surely be found in the careful adaptation of the building to the purpose for which it is intended, in good proportions, and in the sincerity with which the building materials are used. These are the essentials of beauty in every house of worship, whether it be an Egyptian temple, the Parthenon at Athens, a Gothic cathedral or a Quaker meeting-house. There should be no pretense that the materials used are something other than what is actually the case. There should be no painting of plaster to imitate marble, no staining of pine to imitate mahogany, no use of cement blocks to imitate cut stone. Any such pretense is an abomination unto the Lord.

Elaborate ornamentation should be avoided, because it is costly, because simplicity of line and form means that there will be less to distract the attention of the worshiper, and because of the inadequacy of modern craftsmanship, which makes it difficult or impossible nowadays to secure good work, as, for instance, in wood or stone carving. Therefore the design should not show greater elaboration than admits of good execution. The architecture should be structurally as simple as it can be made, avoiding meaningless gables, and those turrets and "gingerbread" moldings which were the product of that architectural nightmare known as "the Queen Anne cottage style." There should be no false buttresses placed where there is no thrust to be met, no false fronts on the church—"brick with mock-marble pious front"³—and no hidden cheapness at the rear of the building out of sight of the passer's eye, but every part of the church should be built with equal care and sincerity. The one permissible exception to this rule is when only a part of the church has been completed, and the point at which construction is arrested is marked by what is obviously a temporary partition wall. Such a wall needs no apology, since it explains itself.

³J. R. Lowell, "The Cathedral."

Styles of architecture.

It should be remembered that though there are many beautiful styles of church architecture it is almost inevitable that some particular style will be peculiarly appropriate to the needs of the parish which is intending to build. It is essential to success that the building committee should choose a style which is simple and fitting, instead of demanding one which is out of place or ornate or bizarre. Byzantine churches or Arabic mosques are interesting and beautiful in Constantinople or Cairo, but they are unsuited to Christian America. The committee, therefore, should choose the style which is adapted to the form of worship to be used, which conforms to local traditions and to the character of the surroundings, and which best lends itself to the available building materials. In building a Roman Catholic church the primary consideration is the celebration of the Mass, and the building must be planned to that end. The present tendency of Roman Catholic architects is to use Italianesque styles as characteristic of the traditions of that church. In the Protestant Episcopal church the present tendency is to follow English Gothic models, since the church building is planned for a liturgical service, generally with a large choir and processional and recessional entrance and exit, for which the Gothic style is particularly adapted. A Quaker meeting-house, in which there is much silent worship as well as individual speaking by worshipers scattered through different parts of the house, calls for a wholly different arrangement. And a church where a congregational, non-liturgical type of worship is used must be adapted primarily to a service in which preaching has a prominent place. It should be remembered, however, that architecture is a living, growing art. Therefore a good architect should not be held to a doctrinaire adherence to established forms, but should be given a free hand in the adaptation of the chosen style to the particular needs of the local situation.

The Gothic style.

In many parts of this country the choice of styles practically lies between Gothic and the so-called Colonial, or Georgian. Both of these styles are an inheritance from the past, the Gothic being a modern revival of the great architecture developed in northern Europe during the Middle Ages, the Georgian being a descendant of the English forms of Renaissance architecture as developed during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries. At the present time there is a strong tendency toward the Gothic style in other denominations besides the Protestant Episcopal. This enthusiasm for the Gothic style is part of the general awakening of interest in the Middle Ages, which has been so notable in the last one hundred years, in marked contrast to the attitude of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the very word "Gothic" was a synonym for all that was barbarous and uncouth. Modern Gothic, when well done, is a beautiful style, churchly in character, giving an atmosphere of devotion to the building. In the hand of an ill-trained architect, however, it is a thing of horror, and it is always a very expensive style in which to build well. A Gothic church ought to be built of stone, with carefully cut trimmings and stone mullions in the windows, which should be of stained glass made by true artists and not by commercial dealers in church furnishings. A Gothic church built of stone conveys an impression of permanency and stability, but it is more difficult to warm and to speak in—unless the church be a small one—because of the high open or vaulted roof.

It should be remembered that the great Gothic churches were not intended primarily for a preaching service, but for a choral celebration of the eucharist in the choir, while the congregation stood or knelt in the nave. Preaching occurred only occasionally and the pulpit was generally erected against a pillar in the nave, so that the preacher might be understood by his hearers. It is difficult to adapt the Gothic style to a service in which preaching plays as important a part as is the case in most Protestant churches, unless the building be a small one,

seating not more than five or six hundred people. Furthermore, there are implicit in Gothic architecture certain theological concepts which most Protestant churches at least do not emphasize, even if they have not rejected them altogether. A Gothic church should be rather long, narrow and high, with a deep chancel, raised three or five steps above the level of the floor of the church and flanked by pulpit and reading desk. The singers are placed within the choir, in stalls facing across the church—not facing the congregation. The altar at the end of the choir is the focus of attention for the worshipers. Churches which do not wish to emphasize the eucharistic form of worship will do well to pause before building in the Gothic style, since, if they choose that style, they are confronted by the dilemma of either building a church which is not a genuine expression of their ideas of worship, or of mutilating a beautiful style to fit their needs. In any case a building committee should avoid using a pseudo-Gothic—a cheap wooden imitation of Gothic, which merely apes the real thing, and is in reality a barefaced falsehood.

The Georgian style.

The Georgian style is anathema to those persons who have turned their eyes back to the thirteenth century as the crowning period of Christian civilization, for whom Gothic is the only type of architecture in which the spirit of Christian worship can be expressed. For persons of a more catholic taste, however, the Georgian style offers certain great advantages. It is more closely associated with the traditions of our eastern states, from New England to Georgia, since it was practically the only style of church architecture used in this country by any denomination down to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Many beautiful specimens of it survive, not only Puritan meeting-houses of the colonial days and of the opening decades of the nineteenth century, but also noble parish churches built for the use of Episcopalian congregations, two best known examples of which are, perhaps, King's Chapel in Boston and St. Michael's in Charleston, S. C. The Georgian style is for Protestant Christianity in this country a

more direct inheritance than Gothic, which comes to us as a deliberate revival imported into this country by enthusiasts for the Middle Ages. A Georgian church is much less expensive to build well than a Gothic church, and easier to heat and light. Owing to its greater width, in comparison with its length, it will seat a much larger congregation in proportion to its size and cost, and it is well adapted to a non-liturgical form of worship, and particularly for preaching, generally having much better acoustic properties. It may be built in wood as well as in brick or in stone, the style being equally adapted to all three materials, and, when done in good taste, gives a structure which is both dignified and worshipful. It does not require stained glass windows, as the Gothic church does, but should always have windows of clear or very slightly tinted glass. Stained glass windows are not in harmony with the Georgian style.

Other architectural styles.

There is a certain advantage in the adoption by a given denomination of a uniform style of architecture, as the Roman Catholics have adopted Italianesque and the Episcopalians English Gothic. In other churches this advantage is perhaps overbalanced by the desirability of variety to accord with the differing traditions and climatic conditions in various parts of the country. The Georgian style is peculiarly appropriate in New England and the other seaboard states as far south as Georgia, and in places in the west where the New England traditions are strong, but neither Georgian nor Gothic is particularly appropriate in Florida or Louisiana or the Southwest or California. In those parts of the country a church must be so built as to shut out the heat and glare of the sun. Mission architecture is appropriate in California and the Southwest, the church building being of stone, brick or concrete with a tiled roof, but such a structure looks entirely out of place on the North Atlantic seaboard. It is true that at the present time the Mission style has been cheapened by being grotesquely abused, but, when carefully worked out, there is no reason why it should not make an appropriate

and beautiful style of architecture for Protestant worship.

Where good building stone is scarce, or has to be brought a long distance, it is better to build of brick, wood or concrete. Whenever brick is used great care should be taken in its selection to choose a well-baked brick with a warm tone, avoiding the cheaper bricks which lack character. Anything like striking designs made by the use of variegated bricks, or stripes produced by alternate layers of brick or stone, should be shunned like the plague.

The church interior.

The church interior should, of course, fulfill the promise of the exterior. It must be arranged for the most convenient and adequate conduct of the type of worship to be observed therein. It should be neither startling nor pretty, but at least simple and dignified, if it cannot attain to nobility and beauty. It should contain nothing, either in furnishings or decorations, which suggest secular associations or which distract the attention of the worshiper, and it should be used only for services of worship, or for occasions closely associated therewith, such as lectures or public meetings in the interest of public morality or education. It should never be used for entertainments, debates on trivial subjects, moving pictures, or in any other way which tends to break down the association of the church building with the idea of worship. People do not easily enter into the spirit of worship in a building which they have lately visited to witness some entertainment. The parish house should be available for such activities—the house of worship should be reserved for its primary purpose.⁴

⁴ The following description of a recently erected church, taken from a newspaper, is a typical example of an all too prevalent but wholly mistaken idea of what a church interior should be like. "The church is one of the finest church structures in the city. Comfortable individual seats have been provided with the expectation that the building will serve the community seven days in the week. The pastor's platform deviates from the usual type of pulpit. It is a stage, furnished with a grand piano and has a reading stand in place of a pulpit. The stage may be used for the presentation of

Interior walls.

In a Gothic church the walls may appropriately be built of cut stone if money is available, or they may be plastered. In a Georgian church the interior is plastered and painted. In any case the interior painting should be of one plain, solid color, of some neutral tint. There should be no frescoing or stenciling of elaborate designs in variegated colors, and no use of painted symbols drawn from pagan sources, nor of ancient Christian symbols which have a theological significance at variance with the theology of the church to be decorated. Plain wall surfaces will least distract the attention of the worshipers from the conduct of the service. If there be in the church some large bare surface which calls for something to fill it, a simply painted text, without meaningless arabesques, is the best decoration.⁵

The windows.

Many church interiors are so dark as to require artificial light, even on a bright day, because of inadequate window areas. Sometimes the architect has provided a sufficient area of *clear* glass to light the building but has made no allowance for the marked diminution of light which will result from filling the windows with stained glass; sometimes the building has had its light shut out by the erection of high buildings on the adjacent lots; sometimes the windows have been placed too low to light the middle of the church. Reasonable foresight will generally prevent the architectural defect of a church so dark that the congregation cannot see to read at midday without artificial light. In planning a Gothic church it should be assumed that the windows will eventually be filled with stained glass and the window areas should be calculated accordingly. In a Georgian church it should be assumed that the windows will be filled with clear glass if the outlook plays, lyceum entertainments, and motion pictures.'’ Apparently the only thing that has been overlooked here is the provision that the seats could be removed so that the floor of the church could also be used for dances and card parties!

⁵ See quotation from George Herbert in footnote on p. 65.

from the church is pleasant, or with a lightly tinted glass if the outlook is upon brick walls. The church walls should be built of sufficient height to permit the light from the windows to enter over the heads of the worshipers. Except in a small church it is not necessary that the bottom of the windows should be much below the level of a man's head, this arrangement leaving a small space below the windows for the placing of mural tablets. In a very small church, where the walls are necessarily low, there should be a large window at the rear of the church, behind the congregation, from which light will fall upon their books. It should never be necessary to resort to skylights, or gable windows in the roof, which are entirely out of place in church architecture, save in the unusual instance of a church built in a solid city block and lighted wholly from above by a roof constructed chiefly of glass.

The organ.

The organ is a piece of church furnishing which has a definite architectural value. The pipes should either be left their natural silvery color, or gilded,—never elaborately painted with meaningless designs. The best place for the organ, acoustically, is at one end or the other of the church. In a Gothic church the natural location is in the choir, behind or above the choir stalls. In a Georgian church the best place is in a choir gallery at the opposite end of the church from the pulpit. The location of the organ behind or beside the pulpit, as is so common in churches built during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, is generally undesirable. The organ is not the object upon which the attention of the congregation should be concentrated. That object should be the altar surmounted by a cross in churches of the sacramental type of worship, or the pulpit in churches which emphasize the prophetic form of religion. The organ makes an unsuitable background for the minister, and the singers, if placed behind him, must face the congregation, so that the unwelcome suggestion of a concert room is inevitably emphasized and every movement of the choir is distractingly visible to the worshipers. Such a location for the organ and choir is,

therefore, to be avoided. A possible exception is that in a very small church, without a choir, a little organ may properly be placed on the floor of the church in full sight of the congregation that the organist may better lead the congregational singing. Another possible location, in churches of moderate size, is in a transept in which a choir gallery is carried out to the wall of the nave. This is less advantageous acoustically than a location at the end of the church, but is not open to the objections of a choir directly behind the minister.

The pulpit and reading-desk.

In a Gothic church the pulpit and reading-desk, or lectern, are located on opposite sides of the entrance to the choir. In a Georgian church they may be so located, but more commonly the pulpit is centrally located and serves as a reading-desk also. In many Protestant churches the pulpit is hardly more than a bookstand set on a platform, about which the preacher walks to and fro as he speaks. There is a type of pulpit orator to whom this arrangement is acceptable. Henry Ward Beecher was an outstanding example. He wanted a platform about which he could roam, rather than what he called "one of those old-fashioned swallow's nests on the wall." He felt that thus he could get closer to his people. His illustrious example to the contrary, a pulpit is better suited to the conduct of worship than a platform, with its suggestions of the lecture room, or of political eloquence, for the sermon ought not to be an oration, a lecture or an essay, but a sermon.

In every case both the pulpit and reading-desk should be specially designed and built for the church, rather than bought ready-made from some church furnishing company, except where the church cannot afford to put specially designed furniture in at once, in which case the commercial articles may be used as a temporary expedient, but the ready-made articles are generally bad in design and out of keeping with a well-planned church. The floor of the pulpit should be at least three feet above the floor of a small church, and more in a large church, but the old-fashioned high pulpit is desirable only in a church with

galleries, in which case the height should be such that at least the head of a small man in the pulpit will be clearly visible to all persons sitting in the galleries. The sides of the pulpit should be built to a height of about three feet from the floor thereof, topped by a ledge not less than eight inches broad. The board upon which the preacher lays his manuscript or notes should not be less than twelve by fifteen inches, and should be so arranged as to be easily raised and lowered, and tilted. There should always be provision in the pulpit for artificial lighting, and in many churches an acousticon is attached for the benefit of deaf people in the congregation. It is not ornamental if left exposed to view, but it can easily be screened from the congregation by a hanging piece of brocade of suitable color. In a Gothic or Italianesque church the pulpit is sometimes built of stone or marble, otherwise it is of oak. In the Georgian churches of the colonial period it was often built of mahogany, but nowadays is commonly of a less expensive wood, painted white, with a mahogany or cherry top and sermon board. The reading-desk, if there be one, should be built to match. The brass lecterns so common in the last century are inartistic and undesirable. Both reading-desk and pulpit should have a small concealed shelf or book rack to hold hymnals and service books, making unnecessary the small tables found behind the pulpits in some Protestant churches.

The communion table.

In Roman Catholic churches the altar is always, and in Episcopal churches is commonly of stone built into the church. In other churches a movable communion table is commonly used. It should be substantial in construction, of oak or mahogany to match the pulpit and reading-desk, and designed for the church, its size varying somewhat in proportion to its setting.

The seats for the clergy.

In Gothic churches the ministers are seated with the choir in stalls assigned to them. In a Georgian church, or one of some other architectural style, one or more

movable chairs are provided, just behind the pulpit, or in the chancel, if there be one. In a small church it is well to provide three, in a large church five such chairs, for use upon occasions when more than one minister takes part in the service. The chairs should be carefully designed or selected to match the rest of the chancel furniture. Sometimes a bench, long enough to seat at least three persons, is provided instead.

The pews.

The old-fashioned, square box pews, characteristic of the older colonial churches and still in use in a few places, are picturesque, but wasteful of space, and give an appearance of being inhospitable to strangers. A modern church will naturally use bench pews of a character appropriate to the rest of the church interior. If of the natural color of the wood, or stained, they, like the rest of the church furniture, should have a dull waxed finish, instead of being brightly varnished so that they will reflect gleams of light into the eyes of the congregation. Varnish is also liable on a warm day to stick to the clothes of people sitting in the pews. Curving rows of seats on a floor sloping to the pulpit are to be avoided as giving the suggestion of a theater. That is also a valid objection to individual folding seats, except as a temporary expedient until the church can put in properly designed pews.

In a small church the pews are best arranged in two blocks, with a wide main aisle in the middle of the church and a side aisle along either wall. In a large, wide church three blocks of pews may be better, with two broad aisles. A central aisle, however, is preferable for weddings and funerals. It should be wide enough to permit a coffin to be carried up without crowding the bearers, that is, not less than five feet. There should also be room enough at the foot of the chancel steps, or before the pulpit in a church in which the latter is centrally located, to deposit the coffin and to turn it, or for a wedding party to stand for a marriage service. If the church has more seats than are needed for ordinary occasions, so that the congregation seems thin and scattered, the removal of a few

pews at the back of the church will help to bring the congregation forward.

The control of gifts and memorials.

Very often some of the furnishings may be offered as gifts, or, in a church already equipped, members may from time to time wish to give memorials, perhaps in the form of tablets, or stained glass windows. All such gifts should be especially designed for the place they are to occupy, and the design should be approved by the governing board, or by a competent committee, before it is actually executed. Otherwise there is always danger that a well-meaning person with poor taste may inflict upon a parish some unsuitable object which is a blemish on the interior of the house of worship. The society has a right to safeguard itself against this risk, and if it be clearly understood in advance that the approval of a competent committee is required, no difficulties are likely to arise.

CHAPTER VII

THE PARISH HOUSE

The value of a parish house.

Previous to the nineteenth century parish houses were very seldom, if ever, found, as part of the equipment of Protestant churches in England or the United States. The meeting-house of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had only a small retiring room for the minister. With the development of Sunday-Schools from their beginning early in the nineteenth century, and the great enlargement of parish activities in the last fifty years, an adequate parish house has become an essential for carrying on the work of a modern church. A church is no longer a preaching post, open one day a week, but a center for various social, educational and philanthropic interests which must be given house-room. Every church, therefore, should study carefully its opportunities for such work in the community, and should seek to equip itself adequately to meet these needs.

The location of the parish house.

The ideal arrangement is an architectural group, including church, parish house and parsonage as separate units in an organic whole. Where financial resources permit the execution of such a plan the house of worship should be the dominating feature of the group, both in its location and its architectural quality. The parish house should be definitely subordinated to the church, being located behind or on one side.

Such an ideal plan, however, is often impossible because of either the expense involved or lack of space. The latter consideration applies especially to old churches about which other structures are closely built, where there is no oppor-

tunity to acquire sufficient land immediately adjoining the house of worship for the erection of a parish house. In such cases the next best thing to do is to acquire a parish house by purchase or erection on some other site as near the church as is practicable. If the church is a downtown one, at some distance from the residence district where most of the parishioners live, it is better to locate the parish house where it will be most accessible to the homes of the people. Such a geographical separation of the parish house from the house of worship is, however, undesirable where it can be avoided, as it weakens the associations which bind the people, especially the children, to the house of worship.

Another possible location for the parish house is in the basement beneath the house of worship. This arrangement is to be recommended only on grounds of economy. It does mean the maximum use of the smallest practicable area of land, with a minimum building cost for the space provided. On the other hand it is much better that the house of worship should be an architectural unit by itself, devoted wholly to its primary purpose, and that the roof which covers the church should not shelter the other miscellaneous activities of the parish. Parish rooms in the basement usually involve raising the floor of the church to a height eight to fifteen feet above the ground level in order to give sufficient head-room in the basement. A church thus raised on stilts, with a basement or ground floor which is obviously used for miscellaneous purposes, can never present as beautiful or dignified an exterior as a church which is rooted close to the ground. Furthermore a considerable flight of steps from the sidewalk to the church door is a discouragement to the old and the infirm, an inconvenience at the time of weddings and funerals, and an obstacle to ready entrance which even the young and vigorous must make a conscious effort to overcome. Any shopkeeper knows the advantage of having a shop which customers can enter with but a single step from the street level, for the purchaser will turn in where he can do so with least trouble. The same principle applies to a church. The objection to locating the parish house beneath the church is weakest

where the church is built upon sloping ground. In such cases it is often possible to have the main entrance to the house of worship where the ground is highest, using only two or three steps from the street level to the entrance, and to locate the entrance to the parish house at the other end of the building, where the ground may fall away enough to give sufficient head-room. Some old or small churches may find parish rooms in the basement the only practicable arrangement, but it is not a desirable one where it can be avoided.

What the parish house should contain.

In general the parish house, wherever located, should be planned to accommodate the educational, social and administrative functions of the church. There should be a separate coat room and lavatory for each sex. For social purposes there should be an assembly room large enough either to seat comfortably the whole Sunday-School, with considerable room for other persons who may wish to attend on special occasions, or to accommodate parish meetings, church suppers, church fairs and similar gatherings. It should be designed with a level floor and movable chairs, with a stage at one end large enough for small dramatic performances—if the church discipline does not forbid such entertainments—and with equipment for a lantern and moving pictures. There should also be a small kitchen immediately adjoining the assembly room, containing a small stove and other equipment for making coffee or preparing simple hot dishes for parish suppers, and sufficient shelves for the storage of dishes and similar equipment.

For its educational work, in addition to the assembly room used by the Sunday-School for opening and closing services, the parish house should contain a room for each class in the Sunday-School. Where such class rooms are lacking it is, of course, possible to hold classes in the nooks and corners of the assembly room or of the church itself, but such shifts are far from desirable. It is much better, if possible, to provide a room for each class, sufficiently lighted and ventilated.

In addition to provision for the social and educational

life of the church, parish houses should also include suitable offices for church administration. Most of our older churches have what is by courtesy called "the minister's study," where he may deposit his coat and hat before going into the pulpit. These little rooms are often cold, badly lighted and unattractive, and sometimes are littered with old hymn books, broken furniture and other lumber. Sometimes the choir must share the use of them with the minister. The modern church should be planned on quite a different basis. The minister's study and the church office are nowadays recognized as a necessary part of the equipment of a modern church. There should, therefore, be a suitable room definitely set aside as the minister's study, and never used for miscellaneous purposes, so located that he can quickly step from it into the chancel or pulpit without passing through the assembly room or the body of the church, and easily accessible from the street, preferably through the church office if there be one. It should be well lighted, ventilated and heated, and equipped with a desk, chairs, bookcases and filing cases. An open fireplace will add much to the comfort and cheer of the room. A separate lavatory should be connected with the study, and a closet with hangers for his coat and his black silk preaching gown, or such robes as he may wear in the conduct of the church service. There should be somewhere in the parish house a small, built-in safe to hold the church silver, record books, etc., and probably the minister's study is as good a place as any for such a safe. In Roman Catholic and in Protestant Episcopal churches a much larger equipment is required in the way of receptacles, to hold the vessels used in the celebration of the eucharist, and the various ecclesiastical garments worn by the priest,⁶ but the foregoing will suffice for the average Protestant church.

The church office should be a separate room. It is essential in any church large enough to provide a parish assistant or a stenographer, or both, for its minister. The church office should contain all the equipment for keeping the records of the church, the stenographer's typewriter and the

⁶ See De Witt, "Decently and in Order," pp. 58-59, for a brief statement about the equipment of a sacristy.

parish assistant's desk, and should be used as the ante-room for visitors coming to consult with the minister, who can thus be protected from unnecessary and inconvenient intrusions.

There should also be a room for the choir, adjacent to the organ and with immediate access to the choir stalls, the precise location depending upon the plan of the church, the type of choir employed, and the form of service used. The choir room should be furnished with a desk for the organist, cases to contain the music sheets and hymn books, and closets or racks for the coats, hats and umbrellas of the singers, and their gowns or other vestments, if the choir be a vested one. The best arrangement is a rod with the necessary number of hangers, with a shelf above for hats and a row of boxes beneath for overshoes. In the case of a large, mixed choir, separate coat rooms should be provided for men and women.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PARSONAGE

A residence for the minister.

A suitable parsonage is a valuable asset for any parish. In the Roman Catholic Church every organized parish is required to maintain a dignified, furnished residence, if possible adjoining the church, for the parish priest and his assistant clergy. Except in mission fields, where as yet it has not been possible to purchase or erect a priest's house, the Roman priest is not permitted to live in lodgings. In this, as in many other practical matters, the Roman Church exhibits the sagacity born of long experience. It early learned that to do his best work the priest must have his own residence, where he can live with sufficient comfort to sustain good health and with a dignity which will maintain his own self-respect and the regard in which his parishioners hold him. Living in his own house, he is also better protected from malicious gossip and from untimely interruptions. The older Protestant churches have also appreciated the value of a suitable residence for the minister. Anciently in England no church might be consecrated unless there were a parsonage and glebe attached to it, and to-day almost every Anglican parish church has its rectory or vicarage.

In the United States the custom of providing a parsonage varies greatly with the locality and with denominational usage. The Protestant Episcopal Church, following the example of the Church of England, usually expects to provide a rectory for the minister. Almost every Methodist church owns a parsonage, and most Presbyterian churches provide a manse. In other bodies such provision is less common, in spite of the fact that a church adequately

equipped with a good parsonage is undoubtedly in a more advantageous position in the matter of securing a desirable minister, especially in times when there is a shortage of houses in the community. Many a church has failed to secure the man whom it had called to its pulpit because it could offer him no suitable place of residence, for a minister who is already well settled, especially if he have a family, is much less likely to accept a call to another field if, in making such a change, he must leave a comfortable home, and either camp out for an indefinite period in cramped quarters or pay an abnormally high rent for a badly located and unsuitable house. Every well organized and established parish should, therefore, consider a parsonage as a part of its essential equipment.

Its location.

There are, however, certain practical points which must be carefully considered in the purchase or erection of such a house. The first is the question of location. Where the church itself is located in a residence district, and land is available, it is best to erect a parsonage immediately adjoining the church, so that the church, parish house, and parsonage form a consistent architectural group. This desirable arrangement may not be practicable where the church is an old one, or is located in a downtown business district. In such instances the parsonage should preferably be built in that residence district in which the larger part of the parishioners themselves live, but, if possible, within walking distance of the church. The parish should avoid the choice, on the one hand, of a too fashionable street where the standard of living will be beyond the minister's salary, or, on the other hand, of a mean street in a district which is on the down grade. The best location for a parsonage is on a quiet but easily found side street, where professional or business men of good standing live.

In small towns or villages, where land is available, it is very desirable that there should be enough ground for a small vegetable garden and a few fruit trees. Gardening is a healthful relaxation for the minister, less expensive and more appropriate than golf. It is also desirable in most

locations that there should be a small garage attached to the parsonage.

Type of house required.

The size and equipment of the parsonage should not be disproportionate to the minister's salary. This disproportion is likely to exist only when some parishioner bequeaths a dignified residence, with perhaps a good deal of ground about it, to the church for use as a parsonage. The intention is good, but the residence may be too large for the minister, costly to heat, furnish, and keep in good repair, with the lawns and flower beds so extensive as to require the larger part of a man's time to keep them neat and in good order. If the parsonage be unendowed, or if the minister has no private means to supplement his salary, such a residence may become a great burden to him. One finds such a condition not infrequently in England, where many a rectory is a residence requiring a considerable retinue of servants and a much higher expenditure than the income of the parish can possibly meet to-day. In such circumstances the parish is practically limited in its choice of ministers to those few men who have private means. The only way out of such a situation is for the parish either to sell the residence which has been bequeathed to it and with the proceeds purchase more suitable quarters, or to secure an endowment for the parsonage, the income of which will adequately provide for the necessary periodical repairs, pay for the upkeep of the grounds, and meet charges for heat and light. Even where such an endowment is available the parish should remember that the minister's salary must be sufficient to enable him to live in a way answerable to the residence which he occupies. It is not fair to put the minister and his family into some fine old mansion which has been bequeathed to the parish unless he is also paid a salary which will enable him to maintain himself respectably in the house in which he must live.

One of the difficulties in planning a parsonage for a Protestant church lies in the marked variations in housing requirements of successive ministers. The minister for whom the parsonage is purchased or built may be, for

example, a married man without children. His successor may have a family of four or five children. His successor in turn may be a bachelor. In view of these possibilities the only thing which the parish can do is to build a house suitable for an average family; sufficient, let us say, to accommodate the minister, his wife, and three children, with one guest room and one or two servants' rooms in communities in which domestic service may be available, and at least two bathrooms. The childless minister, who does not need to use the whole house, can either close some of the rooms or rent them to lodgers. Even if there is an office or minister's room at the church, the minister should also have a study in the parsonage to which he can retire. This room should not be located on the ground floor with an outside entrance to which visitors may come directly, thus depriving the minister of any protection against interruption, but is best located in the top of the house where he will be less easily disturbed.

Furnishing the parsonage.

It is also desirable that the parsonage should be at least partly furnished, since many ministers do not own enough furniture adequately to furnish a house, or, if they are called from a distant part of the country, find it very expensive to ship for considerable distances belongings which may not be really worth the cost of transportation. Such furniture as is provided should be plain and simple, but substantial and in good taste—not dilapidated odds and ends left behind by preceding ministers, or ugly pieces of a bygone style discarded by the children of deceased parishioners of wealth, and foisted upon the long-suffering minister. Due allowance for wear and tear and breakage of furniture should be made in calculating the necessary expenditures for the maintenance of the property.

Maintenance of the parsonage.

In the Roman Church and in the Church of England the incumbent is responsible for repairs and maintenance of the priest's residence. It should be remembered, however, that in those churches the priest has a much greater con-

trol over the finances of the parish than is the case in most Protestant communions in this country, in which the minister generally has no authority to spend the money of the church. In these latter bodies, therefore, the minister should not be expected or required to pay any part of such charges, but the upkeep of the parsonage should be under control of the Committee on Grounds and Buildings, or of a sub-committee, who should be scrupulously careful to see that the parsonage is kept in good repair. Unless the responsibility for the maintenance of the parsonage is definitely placed upon a single committee, what is everybody's business becomes nobody's business. It is frequently observed that an institution makes a poor landlord—that a church is more niggardly in the maintenance of its minister's residence or a college in the maintenance of its professors' houses than the average landlord who is dependent upon rents for his income. The minister is not in the position of an ordinary tenant who can move to another residence if his landlord does not adequately maintain the property, for the minister usually must either live in the parsonage, no matter how shabby it may be, or quit the parish. Furthermore, the minister is in a position in which it is difficult for him to demand repairs or improvements which he would not hesitate to ask of an average landlord. All the more is the parish under moral obligation to maintain the parsonage in good order; to make sure that the roof is tight, that the house is painted when necessary, that the furnace is adequate, that the walls are repapered when they become soiled, and that the whole property is suitably kept up. It is a good rule for the Committee on Grounds and Buildings to go over the parsonage every fourth year for minor repairs, and every eighth year for a thorough overhauling. Inasmuch as this will involve the periodical expenditure of considerable sums of money, it is advisable that the annual church budget should include a fixed sum to be set aside for repairs on the church and parsonage, so that money will be available when needed. Otherwise it will become necessary to raise a special fund whenever any substantial repairs are required.

It is natural and proper that a parish should feel a

sense of pride in its ownership and due maintenance of the parsonage, but the Committee on Grounds and Buildings, and the parish as a whole, should recognize that the parsonage is the home of the minister and of his family in precisely the same sense as if he were occupying a privately rented house. Parishioners, therefore, should not treat the parsonage as semi-public property which they are at liberty to commandeer regardless of the convenience of the minister and his wife; and this applies equally to the parsonage furnishings, which should be borrowed for parish parties and similar occasions only in that measure in which any member of the church might be asked to loan articles for such church purposes.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCH FINANCES

In the administration of a parish it should never be forgotten that no church exists for its own sake, but only for the community in which it is placed, for the human souls which it can serve. Its purpose should never be either mere self-perpetuation or self-aggrandizement, but the mobilization and expenditure of all its powers, material, moral, and spiritual, for constructive work in the lives of the men and women whom it is able to touch. That church is a success which is able to gather up and to expend approximately its full strength, be that strength little or great. That church is in some degree a failure which lacks the will or the ability both to gather up and to expend the power of which it is capable.

Businesslike methods.

Businesslike methods in the financial administration of a church are of vital importance to its welfare. Inefficient administration, hand-to-mouth ways of raising money, carelessness or tardiness in the payment of bills, usually indicate low vitality in a church, and are a constant source of danger and an invitation to financial calamity. They are the result sometimes of ignorance or of timidity on the part of the minister, but more commonly of negligence and indifference on the part of the laymen, who frequently do not consult the minister about the business affairs of the church and resent or disregard suggestions from him. Not infrequently the laymen of a church shirk a large measure of their responsibility, either because the business is conducted by a little group who do not take the parish as a whole into their confidence, or because the affairs of the

church seem to them trivial and unimportant, with the result that church business is administered with a slackness which these same men would recognize as disastrous in a commercial enterprise. The financial problem of many a church would be well on the way toward solution if the business men of the parish would hold themselves responsible for the establishment and faithful administration of sound business methods in its affairs.

The minister's responsibility.

The theory that the minister should have nothing to do with the business affairs of the church is a sound one in so far as it means that he should be relieved of all responsibility for raising or administering the income of the church. His relation to the trustees of the church, however, is in certain aspects not very unlike that of the manager of a cotton mill to its board of directors. He should be invited to sit with the board and enter into its counsels save on exceptional occasions, and he is entitled to a thorough acquaintance with the business affairs of the parish to which he ministers, especially as only too often his professional success is largely measured by the financial condition of the church. It is true that a minister of deeply spiritual nature and gifted with unusual preaching ability may cause his church to grow in spite of the handicap of inefficient administration by the laymen, but poor business methods will be an unnecessary drag upon an otherwise successful ministry. Fortunately it frequently happens that vigor and spiritual power in the pulpit so stimulate the congregation that they develop into a careful and well-managed organization. Such a result is almost certain evidence that the church is spiritually sound, whereas continuance in slipshod methods is almost equally positive evidence of spiritual decay. "When the temporalities go wrong," wrote a wise Roman Catholic bishop, "the spiritualities are sure to get into disorder." Efficient administration, in raising money so that an adequate income is secured for the work of the church, in prompt payment of bills, and in making a complete public report of income and expenditure, will build up the self-respect of the parish

and gain the respect of the community, which unhappily has only too good reason for surprise when a church transacts its affairs with scrupulous care. It is particularly important that the church should make full and prompt payment for all goods received or professional services rendered, without soliciting special discounts, or gratuitous service from, for example, a lawyer or an architect, even though they be church members, unless it be freely offered as a contribution to the church.

Miscellaneous sources of income: (a) plate collections.

It is essential that the great bulk of the money needed should be secured from dependable sources, allowing only a small margin for income raised by the uncertainties of plate collections, by church fairs, or by the rental of the church property for miscellaneous purposes. Income from these latter sources should be regarded as windfalls, being uncertain and fortuitous additions to the revenue of the church. The practice of taking up a collection during the service of worship is strongly to be commended. It was the usage of the early church and is the habit of many branches of modern Christianity. The collection offers the most convenient opportunity for many persons, especially of small means, or visitors, to make their financial contribution to the church. It symbolizes the duty of the Christian to give as well as to receive. But it should be made a formal part of the service, and never be merely a mercenary solicitation. In churches of very limited resources it will be necessary to use the collection for the running expenses of the church, but wherever possible it is better to set it aside for special purposes, announced beforehand.

The plate collections taken up in church should be carried to the church office or the minister's study, immediately after the close of worship, by the treasurer, or in his absence by some other church officer, and should be there counted. It is a good plan to have two persons count the money together. The amount should be noted on a slip of paper and initialed by one or both of those who have counted it. This procedure will protect the treasurer against the possibility of malicious gossip which may arise

if he is careless in handling the church money. Some church treasurers, for instance, simply scoop the money into their own pockets, count it alone at home, and report the amounts only in their monthly or annual statements. Probably not one man in a thousand who does this is dishonest, but the method is none the less objectionable.¹ Care should be taken that the collection is not left lying in the plates, and the sexton should never handle it, not that sextons are any less honest than other men but simply because it is not fair to put temptation in their way and to subject them to possible suspicion. Therefore, if no church officer is at hand to take care of the money, the minister should do so himself, either turning over the cash or sending a check to the treasurer on Monday morning.

In the same way the cash boxes near the door of the church, if there be any, should be regularly emptied and the amounts counted and noted by the treasurer or his deputy. This should be done at least weekly; in a much frequented church it may be necessary daily, since in large cities such boxes are always a temptation to sneak thieves.

¹ The following quotation from *The Churchman* of March 21, 1914, illustrates this point:

“We know of one parish where the treasurer was accustomed to report to his rector the amount of the Sunday offering without troubling to count it. He ‘estimated’ it by its bulk and carried it home to deposit in the bank the next day. No one but the treasurer could possibly know the exact amount. He had held the office for years. Everyone knew him and his honesty was unquestioned.

“Eventually this man incurred the enmity of certain malicious persons in the community. Little insinuations were passed which gained in volume as they traveled. The congregation suddenly realized that it had no means of knowing if its funds were accurately accounted for; its confidence was shaken and its gifts shrank. The vestry could not act without giving offense and positive proofs of irregularity were lacking. The treasurer could not resign his office without seeming to admit his guilt. It was a most distressing situation, which might easily have been avoided had the vestry been required, say by a diocesan canon, to protect its treasurer, and its treasury, by some simple provision for checks and audits. It is something which every parish treasurer should demand for his own security.”

(b) The church fair.

The church fair is economically wasteful, and is a poor means of raising money for running expenses, but may be justified as a successful method of bringing together people of diverse social groups in work for some common interest, for which special funds are necessary. The holding of raffles for any purpose whatsoever should be absolutely forbidden, as should card parties and every other dubious method of making money. No church should ever solicit contributions from outsiders, particularly in the form of holding up local shopkeepers for donations—a singularly mean and improper way of raising money.

(c) Renting the church property.

The practice of renting the church or parish house for miscellaneous meetings not associated with the work of the church should be avoided whenever possible, since it is almost always disadvantageous to the church. If the use of the property is asked for some lecture of genuine educational value, or for a community welfare meeting, it should be given without charge, except, perhaps, for a fee sufficient to cover the expenses actually incurred for extra heat, light and service.

A church should never make any rental charge for the use of its building for special services, such as christenings, weddings, or funerals, even in the case of persons who do not belong to the parish, although it may properly charge fees to cover the cost of expenses actually incurred in connection with such services, such as additional payments to the sexton or the organist. Such fees, however, should be on a fixed scale, approved by the governing board of the church, and printed in a form which can be handed to persons desiring the use of the church, so that they may know in advance what the charges will be and may make their plans accordingly. One important city church keeps on hand the following schedule which will serve as a sample:

(NAME OF THE CHURCH)

(LOCATION)

Charges for Special Services in the Church (Christenings, Weddings, and Funerals), Fixed by the Board of Trustees

There is no charge for the use of the church building for these services, whether in the case of parishioners or of strangers.

The sexton is entitled to a fee of \$5.00 in cases where he has to open the church especially for the occasion, or render other specific services, but not otherwise.

The organist is entitled to a fee of \$25.00 in cases where he comes to the church for a special service. No person other than the regular organist of the church is permitted to use the organ without the organist's knowledge and consent.

The members of the choir (quartet) are entitled to a fee of \$5.00 each in cases where they come to the church for a special service. If singers other than the regular choir are desired arrangements must be made with the organist.

If an awning is required at the church porch the charge for setting it up will be \$10.00, payable to the Smith Awning Company.

If a police officer is required at the church door the charge will be \$3.00, payable to the Police Department.

Persons who desire a simple service at an hour when the church is in any case open are under no obligation to incur any of the above-mentioned fees, which are payable only for services rendered upon request.

The minister makes no charge for his services, and, in the case of funerals, if a charge for the minister is entered on the undertaker's bill, it should not be paid. The minister is, however, at liberty to accept free-will offerings, either for himself or for the benefit of the church, from such persons as choose to send them after any special service, and he is entitled to re-imbursement for any expenses which he may incur in connection with the service.

No special service shall be conducted in this church by any person other than the settled minister thereof without his knowledge and consent, or, in the case of his absence, that of the chairman or other ranking officer of the Board of Trustees.

The proprietary system.

Three methods of providing a fairly assured income are to a greater or less degree in use among the churches of this country, viz., the proprietary system; the pew-rental

system; and the free-pew or subscription system. Before the Reformation all parish churches and cathedrals were open to all persons on equal terms. The custom of assigning seats to parishioners came in after the Reformation. In this country the proprietary system is an inheritance from the eighteenth century, now found only in our older churches. Under this system the parishioner purchases the legal title to a pew in the church, and thereby becomes a "proprietor" and voter,—in effect a stockholder. The pew is a part of the estate of the holder, being classed as personal property in Massachusetts, and as such can be disposed of by sale or bequest, though usually under conditions prescribed by the church. The right of the owner is limited, however, to use at the usual times of divine service, and he cannot use it for any other purposes. His rights, that is, are subordinated to those of the congregation. In a proprietary church the income of the church comes from the taxes levied annually upon each pew for a proportionate amount of the church expenses. This was the normal method of church finance in many of our older, well-established communities during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and under the conditions of that period did produce stable and dependable income. It is, however, open to many objections. It is undemocratic, since only proprietors may vote, and thus many regular attendants of worship may be excluded from the franchise; it tends to give the control of the church into a few hands; and often, in the passage of time, results in the possession of pews and votes by persons who care absolutely nothing for the church save as it represents for them an investment of some financial or social value. No newly organized society should, therefore, adopt this method of raising money.

The pew-rental system.

The second system is the pew-rental system, in which the society owns the pews, but secures its income by renting them out for sums which vary according to the desirability of the pew. This method is more common, and open to fewer objections than the proprietary system, but also is

undemocratic, giving the best seats to those who pay most, and often withholding a vote from those who may attend church habitually but who cannot afford to rent a pew. The strongest argument for this method, as for the proprietary system, is that the income to be derived from pew rents, like that from taxes on pews, can be closely calculated and is not subject to rapid fluctuations. These advantages, however, may be secured in almost as great degree if the subscription, or "free-pew" system, is carefully administered, without the moral and spiritual drawbacks involved in the older methods. Presumably, therefore, a newly organized society, or one moving into a new church building, will avoid the pew-rental system.

The subscription, or free-pew system.

The third method, used in churches in which pews are neither individually owned nor rented, but in which all sittings are free, is the subscription system. In churches financially administered by this method the bulk of the income is raised by inviting members and attendants to subscribe annually such amounts as they feel able to give, to be paid in quarterly, monthly or weekly installments. This "free-pew" system is the most modern and democratic way of financing a church, and is in wide use today among Protestant churches.

Not infrequently an old church resorts to a combination of these methods, a proprietary church often also renting pews, or a pew-renting church also collecting subscriptions from non-renters, or a church which has sold or rented pews in the past may gradually change to the subscription basis, often with excellent results, both financial and spiritual. Such a change of method is generally desirable, and should be brought about where practicable. Mixed methods of finance are undesirable except in a transition period, or where legal entanglements inherited from the past prevent the complete application of the free-pew system.

The budget.

It is essential that the treasurer should know at the beginning of the fiscal year what regular income the church

can depend upon, whether from pew taxes, pew rents, or subscriptions, and that the budget should be cut so as not to exceed the promised income except in small amount. The system, or rather lack of system, followed by churches which habitually overspend their income, and at the end of each year face a deficit which has to be made up by appealing to a few rich men in the congregation, is bad from every point of view, and should be completely abandoned. It is merely hand-to-mouth finance; it involves a lack of self-respect; it is liable to lead to disastrous results when the wealthy givers die, leave town, or weary of continually making up the deficits. Methods should, therefore, be adopted which will result in placing in the treasurer's hands at the beginning of the year definite subscriptions or pledges which very nearly, if not quite, equal the estimated expenditures. Individuals are sometimes reluctant to commit themselves to a definite contribution, but the society as a whole must commit itself to a stated expenditure, and its individual members ought to take their share of the responsibility. In the few cases in which a subscriber proves unable or unwilling to pay his contribution, it is very seldom advisable to force payment by legal action. Losses from this source will seldom average more than one or two per cent a year, except in some great financial crisis when a whole community may be impoverished.

It is easier and pleasanter to get an adequate number of contributions at the beginning of the year than later to beg for money to pay a deficit which grows larger the longer it is shirked. The Board of Trustees should, therefore, prepare a carefully studied budget, which should be submitted, in printed or typewritten form, at the annual parish meeting, showing the amount which the church will presumably be called upon to spend during the ensuing year. It is only fair to contributors that they should be informed in advance how much money will be needed, and that they should have opportunity to discuss expenditures. A well-planned budget will greatly lessen the risk of a deficit at the end of the year, whereas haphazard expenditure is very liable to leave the church in debt.

The treasurer's report.

The annual report of the treasurer should also be submitted in printed form (or typewritten or mimeographed where cheaper), and should be placed in the hands of every person attending the annual meeting. Reference to printed or typewritten copies is essential to any intelligent understanding of the statement, and prevents the suspicion that something is being withheld from examination or criticism.

The financial statement should contain,

- (a) The treasurer's itemized report of all receipts, expenditures and balances, which should check exactly with the treasurer's books as verified by auditors.
- (b) A statement of any adjustments necessary to show the actual income and charges belonging to the year, whether paid within the year or not. (This may be omitted where the adjustments are so small in amount as to make inclusion unnecessary.)
- (c) A statement of current assets and liabilities.
- (d) A statement of all important increases and decreases as compared with the items of the preceding year. (In the printed report these items may be conveniently shown by setting them in a column on the left-hand side of the statement, parallel with (a).)
- (e) A statement as to any endowment funds held by the society.
- (f) A statement by a professional auditor, or by the auditing committee of the Board of Trustees, showing that the treasurer's accounts and vouchers have been examined and found correct.
- (g) The itemized budget for the new fiscal year, recommended by the Board of Trustees, subject to discussion and adoption by the meeting. Any important increases or decreases should be shown and explained.

It is often helpful to include a classified list of last year's subscriptions, thus: one at \$500; three at \$100 or over;

five at \$75; ten at \$50, etc., down to the lowest amounts, so that the subscriber may more easily judge what amount it is appropriate for him to give. But the subscription lists showing the names and contributions of each individual giver should never be published, and should be held confidential by the Board of Trustees, since many individuals greatly object to any announcement of the amount of their contribution, and are entitled to have their wishes respected. Items of expenditure should be classified under several heads, e.g., salaries; music, grounds and buildings; benevolences, etc.

Methods of securing subscriptions.

The annual meeting of the parish, at which are presented the treasurer's report for the closing year and the budget for the new fiscal year, is the best and most appropriate time for securing contributions. As large an attendance as possible should be drawn out, using pulpit, press and circular notices, and personal effort, and, where possible, there should be a parish supper before or after the meeting. This latter feature gives a social character to the gathering which attracts the less devoted adherents of the church and gives the trustees a desirable opportunity of interesting them. At the meeting there should be opportunity to ask questions about the treasurer's report, after which the budget for the ensuing year should be discussed and voted item by item, at least for the chief items. The people should have a real voice in the business, and should commit themselves to the proposed expenditures, instead of simply accepting what has already been settled for them by the trustees. When this has been done subscription cards should be passed about and subscriptions invited.

The most convenient form of subscription card is one of standard size and shape, easy to file, with a column of amounts ranging, say, from \$500 down to \$1, against which the subscriber may indicate by an X the amount of his pledge, and also the way of paying it, whether annually, quarterly, monthly, or weekly. Every individual should be urged to subscribe, no matter how small the amount some

may be able to give. The young people of the church especially should not be overlooked, but should be invited to give what they can, that they may early begin to cultivate the habit of sharing in the support of their church. The real strength of the finances of the church does not lie in a few large subscriptions, which are liable sooner or later to fail, but in securing a large number of small subscriptions. It has been truly said that "it is the small subscriptions which pay the bills." Furthermore, there is always danger that the large giver may attempt to exercise an undue measure of control over the church, forgetting that no gift of money can purchase the right to dictate the policy of the church or to influence the pulpit. The larger the number of subscribers the less will be this danger, therefore the envelope system should be adopted for those who desire to give small weekly contributions, even though this involve an increased amount of clerical work for the treasurer. The subscription cards should be collected and the results reported before the meeting adjourns. The financial statement and appeal for subscriptions at the meeting should be brief and to the point, and care should be taken not to overurge people to give. The subscription card should not be a demand, but an invitation to join in constructive religious work for the welfare of the community and for wider missionary endeavor.

As soon as practicable after the annual meeting a letter should be sent, in the name of the trustees, to all who have not yet subscribed but who may be reasonably expected to do so. This letter should be accompanied by printed copies of the treasurer's report and of the budget. It should not be sent in one-cent circular envelopes, but should be personally signed by one or more trustees, and sealed. The letter should say that a personal call will be made within a few days if further information is desired, but should ask that if convenient the subscription card be returned by mail to save trouble. Those who do not send in a subscription should be visited by representatives of the church a few days later. The committee appointed to do the calling should be carefully chosen and should call in couples, each couple being assigned the persons with whom

they are likely to have the most influence. Some such visits are generally necessary, as some individuals who are really willing enough to give take it as a matter of course that they shall be personally solicited.

In some cases it may prove best to vary the above procedure by having an "Every Member Canvass" just before the annual meeting of the parish. Where this is done announcement should be made that all persons will be called upon on a given Sunday afternoon by representatives of the church, who will collect the signed subscription cards, and report the results at the meeting. The minister should never be assigned to this service, which is out of his province, though the service on the following Sunday may well be devoted in part to an account of the purposes, work, and value of the church, with a view to increasing appreciation of it and devotion to it, but direct appeals from the pulpit for money from the congregation should be avoided save in cases of extreme necessity.

If, at the end of a fortnight, when the returns are in, there remains a small deficit, it may probably be disregarded, in the hope that economies and plate collections may wipe it out. If there are indications of a large deficit steps should be taken at once to secure more or larger subscriptions, for another canvass toward the end of the year to make up a large deficit will greatly injure the chances of securing subscriptions at the next annual meeting. If a diligent canvass at the beginning of the year does not develop sufficient resources to meet the budget, a reduction of expenditure becomes necessary as a matter of business ethics. Otherwise certain trouble is ahead, which will grow worse the longer the matter is deferred. A parish meeting called to consider reducing the budget will sometimes obviate the necessity of a reduction by drawing out new subscriptions, for some people will only give to a voluntary organization under a sense of necessity.

Here and there persons will be found to object to the foregoing method on the ground that it is bad taste or bad policy to make any public announcement of the financial conditions of a church. Those, however, who contribute to a church stand to it in the relation of shareholders, and

are entitled to know how their enterprise fares. It is, therefore, desirable not only that the trustees should have a treasurer's report at their regular monthly meetings, but that the printed statement should be provided for at the annual parish meeting. Objection is sometimes made that if a surplus is shown the people will no longer exert themselves, or, if there be a deficit, outsiders will see how meager are the resources of the church. Ordinarily few churches show any larger surplus than the trifling balance which prudent management may carry forward to the ensuing year. This is as it should be, for a considerable surplus in successive years commonly indicates that the church is giving less than its full strength to its work. Such a continued surplus is sometimes turned into an endowment fund, but it is better policy to spend the full income of the church year by year, and to develop the endowment fund from special gifts or bequests. Speaking generally, a church ought not to accumulate surplus income, any more than should a college, unless it be for a brief period and for some specific object which will enlarge or solidify its work. Success in both types of institution is measured by expenditures, not by surplus income, for the purpose of both is not financial profit but enlargement of life.

A church, however, is much more liable to show a deficit than a surplus, and sometimes people fear the result of the publication of such information. But knowledge of the facts very seldom really hurts a church if its business affairs are properly administered, and it must not be forgotten that the church is a semi-public institution in which the community at large has also a financial stake through the remission of taxes, a contribution which, in the case of some city churches, amounts to a large sum. Furthermore, the number and size of subscriptions to the church will depend in considerable measure upon how fully the members appreciate the work which the church is doing and realize its financial condition and needs. Where a parish is in healthy condition it is sound policy to keep its members well informed about its affairs, since they will give in proportion to their interest and pride in the church, and

where a church is not in healthy condition its supporters certainly ought to be informed of the fact.

Endowment funds.

Where a church holds a general endowment fund, or a fund given to support some specific phase of its work, a statement as to such fund should always be included in the annual published report of the treasurer. This statement should give the amount of both the principal and the income of the fund; it should list the securities in which the fund is invested and should name the bank in which any cash balance is deposited. The principal should be invested only in securities suitable for trust funds, and no part should be used to pay any debt of the society, unless the fund is specifically given to be used in such way, or be invested in any mortgage or other obligation of the church or of any members thereof. Carelessness in the choice of investments has in many cases resulted in the loss or grave diminution of church funds, often seriously hampering the work of the church through loss of income, and exposing negligent trustees to the risk of legal prosecution. Publicity tends to prevent such carelessness. In small societies, or where expert advice as to investments is not readily obtainable, it is wise to entrust the principal to some large denominational organization, which will agree to take care of the fund and to turn over the annual income to the society in accordance with the purpose of the donors.

Where it is desirable to build up an endowment fund an appeal for gifts or bequests for such purposes should be made at least once a year, perhaps in the minister's or treasurer's annual report, and any accumulated surplus income may, under exceptional circumstances, and with the consent of the parish, be added to the endowment fund. It is well to remember, however, that while an endowment fund is a valuable asset in some cases, and may, indeed, be essential to the life of an historic church or of one with a peculiar work to do either at a strategic missionary point or where large benevolences are called for, it is neither necessary nor desirable that every church should be endowed. It is often better that a church should disappear

when it ceases to be self-supporting, and the members of a church with an endowment need constantly to beware of the moral and spiritual decay which is certain to ensue in any organism which lives without exertion upon the gifts of the dead.

Insurance.

The trustees should not fail to keep all the destructible property of the church adequately insured in a reliable company. Instances have occurred in which a church has been well-nigh ruined by loss of its property by fire after the insurance policy had been allowed to lapse. The treasurer's report should include a statement as to the amount of insurance carried on the property and, where the premium is paid in a lump sum covering several years, the entry in the treasurer's report should indicate that fact. Thus if the premium be \$150 paid for five years' insurance, the report should show advance payments at \$30 a year for the period covered.

Benevolences.

Every church has occasion to raise money during the year for purposes outside the ordinary running expenses of the parish,—for the missionary organizations of the denomination, for “general charities,” or for some particular benevolences in which it may be interested. There are three ways in which money may be raised for such purposes: by having the trustees set aside a fixed sum for the desired object, out of the general income of the church; by taking up one or more special collections on dates previously announced; by asking people to subscribe in advance, payment to be made by the envelope system.

The first method is an undesirable one, since it practically diverts to outside purposes money presumably subscribed to meet the running expenses of the church, and also it fails to make any appeal to the missionary or philanthropic spirit of the people. The second method is an excellent one when systematically followed, in churches where such outside interests are well organized and sustained. The third method is best where donations are made

in small amounts, and where the envelope system is in general use.

Every church should adopt either the second or the third method, for it is a well-recognized fact that, next to the efficient administration of its own affairs, the responsibility assumed by a church for missionary and philanthropic purposes is perhaps the best test of its vitality. It is often best to put the management of the benevolences of the parish into the hands of a special Committee on Benevolences, with its own treasurer who collects and disburses, at the direction of the Committee, the money raised for these purposes. The Committee should represent all the varied interests of the parish and should, of course, work in coöperation with the trustees. The best results are secured when the distribution of the money thus raised is left to the discretion of the Committee; for the Committee, knowing all the contributions, can usually apportion them better than any individual contributor. The treasurer of the Committee should also make a report, duly audited, at the annual meeting of the church.

Churches which adopt modern business methods, with a carefully prepared budget; publicity of accounts; a well-planned annual parish meeting; and prompt and efficient management in the treasurer's office, not infrequently find that their income is considerably increased thereby. It should never be forgotten, however, that even the best system which can be devised is not automatic, and will work only when there is intelligence and energy behind it. The system can simplify the treasurer's task, but it will produce the expected results only when it is administered by a man who really cares about making it go.

CHAPTER X

THE MINISTER'S SALARY AND FEES

The minister's salary.

The minister's salary should be regarded as the primary charge which the church is under obligation to meet. As stated in the opening chapter, the call to the minister and his acceptance constitute a contract between him and the church, which renders the latter legally liable for the salary at which he was engaged. Ordinarily the free use of the parsonage is understood, unless special arrangements provide otherwise, and its fair rental value is often computed as a part of the salary. Monthly payment of the salary is usual, and is preferable to quarterly or semi-annual payments, since few ministers have other income to draw upon and must meet their household bills monthly. For the same reason prompt payment of the salary is very important to the minister, who is liable to grave inconvenience if his salary is delayed or is paid at uncertain intervals. Indirectly the church itself suffers from the resultant inability of the minister to pay his bills promptly, for the accumulation of debts on his part will ultimately reflect discredit on the church. Uncertainty as to when he will receive his salary has also a very unsettling effect upon him, and may become a real point of irritation, about which it is difficult for him to speak frankly but which nevertheless tends to alienate him from his parish. To let the minister's salary run unpaid is, in effect, to require him to loan the church money without interest. Instead of doing this the church should, if necessary, arrange for a loan from the bank with which to pay its bills, and it should be understood from the outset that this will be done when occasion arises.

The relationship between the minister and his parish should be regarded as primarily a spiritual bond rather than a business transaction, but this result is most surely attained by eliminating causes of friction or misunderstanding about money matters and reducing communications on the subject to the necessary minimum. To this end the treasurer should be punctilious in the payment of salary on the exact date upon which it is due, and should arrange to deposit the monthly check to the minister's credit in the bank in which he keeps his account, without requiring him to sign a receipt.

The theory of the minister's "living."

The church is liable to forget the principle involved in the matter of the minister's salary. He is not a "hired man," who is paid to do a certain work, but a professional man, in a sacred vocation, who is assured a living in order that he may render a certain service to the community. Indeed the old English use of the word "living" for the income of an ecclesiastical benefice indicates precisely the theory upon which the minister is paid. He is not working for profit, nor for the money there is in the position, but is given a maintenance because only so can he be freed from other labor to give his full time and strength to the work of the church. In almost every branch of the Christian Church it has been regarded as undesirable that the minister of religion should be involved in money-making occupations which almost inevitably tend to distract him from his religious duties. No man can well serve two masters—he cannot do his best work for God and also constantly be on the lookout to make money. Jesus, during his ministry, was supported by his followers, "who ministered unto [him] of their substance."¹ St. Paul did, indeed, maintain himself by tent-making, but he was not a married man and the circumstances were quite exceptional, and, furthermore, he clearly asserted the right of him who proclaimed the gospel to live by the gospel.² The Society of

¹ Luke viii, 3.

² I Cor. ix, 7-14.

Friends offers the most conspicuous example of habitual religious work on the part of persons whose living is not in chief part provided by the Society, and even here the exceptions are sometimes more apparent than real. George Fox in his early ministry seems always to have had enough money to live upon, from some source not now ascertainable; later he was largely maintained by his followers, and eventually he married a woman of property. John Woolman and other Friends traveling "under a concern," paid their way in part only, for the rest being entertained by members of the meetings which they visited.

The Roman practice.

The Roman Church has for many centuries required the "religious," that is members of monastic orders, to take a vow of poverty, but this does not mean that monk and nun are destitute, not knowing whence their food and clothing are to come. It means that they pledge themselves not to go into remunerative occupations, not to accumulate private property, but to give what they have to the church and to depend upon the church for support. In practice men and women are not ordinarily received into monasteries or convents, nor are candidates for the priesthood ordained, unless their support is guaranteed by themselves or others. The secular priest in the Roman Church does not take the vow of poverty, but he may not undertake any kind of trade, nor the administration of temporal affairs without the permission of his bishop, nor may he accept the care of the money of other people, especially of the poor. The parish to which he is assigned must provide him with quarters in a priest's house and pay him a fixed minimum salary, which is estimated as sufficient to enable him to live in simple comfort and good health. The parish must maintain him so long as he is competent to do the work. In addition he is entitled to fees for masses, baptisms, marriages, and other professional services. The salaries and fees are fixed at a uniform rate for all priests doing work of the same grade, the differences in compensation arising generally from the greater number of fees to be obtained in large and popular parishes, often running

up to handsome figures. If he be removed for disciplinary reasons, or physical disability, or old age, the priest's support is chargeable on the diocese in which he was ordained, and he will be cared for in a monastery or otherwise. Every priest knows that so long as he remains in communion with his church he need take no thought for food, clothing, or shelter. He is relieved from these anxieties that he may devote himself wholly to his work, unencumbered by any worldly ties. In return for this protection the church requires his unconditional obedience, so that he must go where he is sent and do what he is told by his ecclesiastical superior.

The Protestant practice.

The Protestant minister is, in certain respects, at a grave disadvantage in comparison with the Catholic priest. He has in most ways, indeed, a far greater freedom, but on the other hand far less security. Except in unusual cases he is not under obligation to go to any particular field at the command of a superior, but is free to accept or refuse any call which he may receive. On the other hand, he often has the burden of family responsibilities, and his position is far more precarious, because he seldom has any guarantee of a living wage, or of protection in time of disability or when old age approaches. In this country the Protestant Episcopal Church, with its admirable pension system, comes nearest to making adequate provision for its ministers. The thoroughly successful minister in a strong parish gets a good salary, enough to live upon and to lay aside something against illness and old age. But although Protestant churches almost universally, and by a sound instinct, prefer a married man, many small churches pay what is really adequate only for the maintenance of a single man. The married minister, with, it is to be hoped, children to bring up, has a very difficult time to make both ends meet on a salary which often comes to no more than the stipend and perquisites of his celibate neighbor, the Catholic priest. Furthermore, since in a time of rising prices wages always rise more slowly than prices, and salaries more slowly than wages, most ministers today are

not nearly so well off as they were before the Great War. There has been much discussion in recent years about the causes for the falling off in number and quality of recruits for the ministry. The causes are numerous and very complex, but one of the major factors is thought to be the unsatisfactory economic status of the Protestant ministry. It is not that anyone expects the ministry to offer financial prizes such as are obtainable by the ablest men in the professions of law or medicine. No man in his senses, much less one with high ideals, goes into the ministry simply for the pay. He chooses it, in spite of the low salaries, because it offers him a large opportunity for the service of God and man. He cannot properly perform that service, however, if he receives less than a decent livelihood. For their own sakes the churches need to reconsider the whole theory of ministerial salaries. Salaries ought to be regarded not as a pecuniary equivalent for services rendered, but as a living—a freeing of the minister from the necessity of worldly pursuits in order that he may give his whole time and thought to his charge. We hear much of the way in which riches distract men's minds from spiritual things, and the Christian Church has been quite right in its feeling that the minister must not be a money-maker, lest he be absorbed in temporal affairs. But the pressure of poverty and of anxiety for the morrow may just as much force a minister to give undue attention to the cares of this world, especially if he have wife and child. If he is to pay his rent and his grocer's bill and clothe and educate his children he is often obliged to do some close thinking about the situation. The alternatives before the Protestant churches are either to go back to a celibate ministry or to pay salaries which shall free the ministers from unnecessary anxiety for the welfare of their families.

President Charles W. Eliot, dealing with the kindred profession of teaching, has stated the situation in words which apply equally well to the ministry. "Professors," he said, "and other teachers . . . need to be relatively free from pecuniary cares so that their minds may run on their work. To this end they should have fixed salaries, and retiring allowances, so that they may adjust their scale of

living to their earnings, and not have to think about making money, or feel anxiety about disability or old age. This detachment from ordinary pecuniary or livelihood anxieties is an important element in their mental freedom, and for the right kind of person a strong inducement to the profession. The teacher ought always to be a person disposed to idealism and altruism; and he should have abandoned all thought of measuring his success by the size of his income." And again, speaking of the college president: "His inducements to laborious and responsible service are, however, different from those which are effective with other sorts of leaders. A high salary, or the prospect of luxury for himself and his family, will not tempt him. . . . He cannot be induced to do his best work by offering him any money prize, and he will manifest no desire whatever for arbitrary power over masses of human beings, or for what is ordinarily called fame or glory. The effective inducement will be the prospect of eminent usefulness, public consideration, the provision of all real facilities for his work, enough relief from pecuniary cares to leave his mind free for invention and forelooking, long tenure, and income enough for healthy recreations." ³

What is an adequate salary?

Owing to the wide variations in local conditions, it is impossible to lay down anything more than a general principle as to what constitutes an adequate ministerial salary. That principle may be stated as follows: *An adequate salary for a minister in any given parish is the amount which will enable him, with a wife and at least two dependents, to live with reasonable economy in a respectable house, in sufficient comfort to maintain the health of the family; to take sufficient recreation; to keep up his professional standards by the purchase of books and magazines, and by attending conferences; and to make due provision for illness and old age.* In a word the minister, if his effectiveness is not to be handicapped, should have not a bare

³ C. W. Eliot, "Academic Freedom," in Northrup's "Representative Phi Beta Kappa Orations."

subsistence but a fair living salary. What constitutes a fair maintenance varies greatly in different sections of the country and in different types of community. It is not sufficient to say that a given minister probably receives as much money as the average of his parishioners, because in most cases more is expected of him than of the average layman in his parish. He has had to invest more in education than most laymen, and has constant calls upon his purse which they have not. In a farming district the minister who is paid \$1,000 a year may have a larger *cash* income than any of his parishioners, but most of them get a large part of their living from their farms, and live on a scale which really represents an income of \$1,200 to \$1,800 a year. In towns and cities the minister's expenses increase proportionately with the size of the community, and ordinarily are greater than those of most of his parishioners whose income is the same as his. The kindred, and certainly not overpaid profession of teaching offers a standard of comparison. In towns and rural districts the minister's salary should equal that of the superintendent of schools, or of the high-school principal. In a university town the young minister should begin with a salary at least equal to that of an assistant professor and after some years of service he should receive a salary equal to that of a full professor. In large and important city churches it may be necessary to pay the minister a salary approximating that of a college or university president to enable him to meet the demands which will legitimately be made upon him. It should be remembered that poverty is a relative matter, and that the man who feels poor is not necessarily the one with the smallest income, but he whose income is inadequate to meet the obligations imposed upon him by his work and position.

The minister's salary and the church budget.

The proportion which the minister's salary should bear to the total annual budget of the church will necessarily show great variation in churches of different types. When the total expenditure is \$2,000 or less, the minister's salary should represent from 75 per cent to 90 per cent of the

total. That percentage will decrease with the rise in the total expenditures, so that in churches which spend \$15,000 to \$20,000 the minister's salary will average perhaps 40 per cent to 45 per cent of the total. In the relatively few churches with an income exceeding \$20,000 the percentage assigned to salaries is likely to rise again, because such churches are likely to employ more than one minister, besides other professional workers. The following table may roughly indicate what would seem to be a fair proportion of the total expenditures to be assigned to the salary of the minister:

<i>Total expenditures</i>	<i>Minister's salary</i>
Under \$1,500	85%–90%
\$1,600 to \$2,000	75%–85%
\$2,100 to \$2,500	70%–75%
\$2,600 to \$3,500	65%–70%
\$3,600 to \$5,000	60%–65%
\$5,100 to \$8,000	55%–60%
\$8,100 to \$12,000	50%–55%
\$12,000 to \$15,000	45%–50%
\$15,000 to \$20,000	40%–45%

In large churches with more than one minister the senior pastor's salary should represent the percentage indicated above. His associate should be paid a salary not less than that represented by the salary percentage of a budget about one-half as large.

Another method of arriving at a just estimate of what a given church should pay its minister is by a comparison of the general living standards of the community with the annual outlay required of a man living in the manner which the church expects of its minister. Such a scale as is suggested below can be only approximate, since conditions vary considerably even in communities of similar type in different parts of the country, but a comparison of this schedule with that showing the due percentage of the total church expenditures which should be assigned to the minister's salary, will enable any church to reach a just conclusion as to what it should pay.

	<i>Minimum Salaries</i>	
	<i>With</i>	<i>Without</i>
	<i>parsonage</i>	<i>parsonage</i>
In rural districts and in small towns		
under 2,000	\$1,200	\$1,500
Towns, 2,000–15,000	\$2,500	\$3,000
Small cities, 15,000–50,000	\$3,000	\$3,500
Medium cities, 50,000–200,000	\$3,600	\$4,500
Large cities above 200,000	\$4,500–\$6,000	\$5,000–\$8,000
In missionary, secondary or sub-urban churches in such cities...	\$4,000–\$5,000	\$4,500–\$6,000

These figures are those suggested for *minimum* salaries, at the present cost of living (1923). The estimate is liable to fluctuations with the probable rise or possible fall in the cost of commodities. A few large city churches will pay more than the maximum suggested,—\$10,000 or \$12,000, or even \$15,000 being no more than is necessary in a large church in a metropolitan community.

A church which underpays its minister sometimes seeks to salve its conscience by making him “donations.” In old days, when cash was scarce, it was appropriate for the country minister to take part of his salary in wood, potatoes, pork or apples. It is still possible for generous and thoughtful parishioners to add to the comfort and pleasure of the minister and his wife by gifts of fruit, vegetables, flowers or books, by lending them a motor car occasionally, or by showing consideration of them in other ways. Such fruits of genuine personal interest and friendship may amount to a considerable assistance to a family living upon a small salary, and may at the same time feed the spirit as well. But such friendly gifts should be distinguished from the occasional “donations,” whether of cash or of more or less useless articles, by which a church seeks to escape from paying its minister a suitable salary. It contributes to the self-respect of neither the minister nor the church to boost him over a hard place which he could have surmounted alone if he had had a fair living. A church which underpays its minister is sure to get inferior service, because, no matter how devoted a man may be, there will be a certain standard of living below which he cannot maintain his full

efficiency. On the other hand, the church which pays an adequate salary, so that the minister can maintain himself and his family in good condition and without avoidable anxiety for the future, is far more likely to secure the type of man it desires, and to retain him long in its service.

Professional fees.

A good many laymen suppose that the minister makes considerable sums each year, in addition to his salary, from professional fees for christenings, weddings, and funerals, and they like to believe that any inadequacy of his salary is thus made good. It is quite true that some ministers do receive from these sources a considerable addition to their income. This is especially the case among priests of the Roman Catholic Church, in which payment for such services is a matter of course and on a fixed scale; and in some Protestant bodies, particularly with well-known men in populous communities. In most Protestant communions, however, such fees come only as voluntary offerings, and not as fixed charges. This has been the Protestant method of meeting the abuse which has arisen in the Christian Church from time to time when mercenary clergy have sought to extort money from their parishioners for special services. One of the letters of Pope Gregory the Great, written about 600, is a vigorous rebuke to a bishop who had extorted money from a devout Christian woman on the occasion of her husband's funeral, and an old English provincial church constitution lays down the following rule: "We do firmly enjoin that neither burial nor baptism nor any sacrament of the church shall be denied to anyone upon account of any sum of money, nor shall matrimony be hindered therefor."⁴ The Roman Church meets this abuse by fixing a scale of charges; most Protestant churches by an established custom that fees on such occasions shall be voluntary offerings. In the latter, as a matter of practice, no fee is offered or expected in a case of a large proportion of the funerals or christenings, and some ministers habitually refuse to accept them when offered for these services, though willing to accept

⁴ Phillimore: "Eccles. Law" (2d ed.), p. 632.

them for weddings, for which the minister, as an officer of the law, is in fact entitled to make a small charge. This distinction has no logical foundation, though the reason commonly given is that the minister should not take money from people in time of sorrow, especially as the death in a family usually involves other heavy expenses. This may often be an adequate reason for refusing a funeral fee, though a young married couple, just starting out in life, may be as little able to afford a fee.

The right attitude of the minister towards this question of fees is properly based on other grounds. When persons belonging to his own parish desire his services to marry them, to christen their children, or to bury one of their family, he should regard such offices as a normal part of his parish work and perform them regardless of any question of a fee. If they choose afterwards to send him a present, either money or some other gift, as a natural expression of their appreciation, he need have no hesitation about accepting it, save in cases in which he knows that they cannot really afford the fee offered. He must then use his best discretion as to how to return the fee without hurting the donor's feelings—perhaps by asking the bride to accept it as his wedding present.

In the case of persons not attached to his parish he should also conduct the desired office, and do so without the promise of a fee. Such persons have, however, no especial claim upon him and should remember that the service which they are asking may take considerable time and preparation. A funeral service may take half his day, especially if the burial be in some distant cemetery. The people who have called him to their aid would not expect a lawyer or a doctor, even if a personal friend, to render a definitely professional service without suitable compensation, unless the case were one for charity. No more should persons able to pay a reasonable fee to a minister, other than their own pastor, who serves them in a professional capacity, neglect to do so, or send him a trifling sum, perhaps the same as the sexton's tip. Yet this often occurs, generally as the result of sheer ignorance as to the right thing to do. Certainly there is no reason, in the case of

such funerals outside of his own parish, why the minister should not accept a fee for his services. He should never, however, accept a fee from a brother minister, or a minister's family, for a christening, wedding, or funeral. Such offices are always labors of love, though he may accept his expenses if they amount to more than a trifling sum.⁵

Some enterprising undertakers have a way of tucking into their bills a charge for the minister's services. Doubtless some of them do this in their desire to make sure that the minister is not overlooked, though instances are not unknown in which the undertaker, after the bill has been paid, has himself forgotten to send on to the minister the fee which he had collected. In any case the practice is an undesirable one, for it gives the impression that the minister has either permitted or requested a charge to be made. The first time that the minister discovers that any given undertaker has made such a charge he should request him not to do so again, and should return the fee to the person who has paid it, though he may properly accept it if it is again voluntarily offered as an honorarium. If the undertaker repeats the practice, or is discovered to have kept for himself the fee charged upon the bill, the minister should, whenever thereafter he has occasion to conduct funerals at which the offending undertaker is employed, notify the heirs of the deceased not to pay any such charge. The simplest way to establish a right understanding in this matter is for the minister, soon after his settlement and at intervals thereafter, to print in the church calendar a clear, simple statement as to the recognized practice in his denomination in this matter of fees for special services.⁶

The amount which a minister may receive from fees varies greatly with the custom of the locality and the nature of his parish. Wedding fees may range from 50 cents to \$100; probably \$5 or \$10 is the usual amount. A few ministers, settled in an exceptionally favorable location, or widely known and sought after, may receive as much as \$1,000 a year from such sources. For most ministers the receipts from such sources are so small and irregu-

⁵ See also pp. 168-169.

⁶ See p. 98.

lar as to be a quite undependable source of income. It is the men in large and conspicuous parishes who receive the handsomest fees, while the men in small churches, who most need such augmentation of their salaries, receive few fees and small ones. In any case it is a grave injustice to the minister for the parish to assume that such receipts can be counted upon to supplement an insufficient salary. Even where the professional fees are considerable that fact does not justify the church in paying less than a fair salary.

CHAPTER XI

THE ORGANIST AND CHOIR

The function of music in the church service.

An understanding of the function of music in the order of worship is essential to any discussion of the position of the choir and organist in the church. Music is a marked form of emotional expression, natural and appropriate for a service of worship when rightly chosen and sincerely rendered. In churches with a highly developed liturgy, where the appeal is more emotional than intellectual, music holds an important place, for music stimulates the feelings much more quickly than words. Thus the Divine Liturgy of the Eastern Church is almost entirely sung or intoned, as is High Mass in the Roman Church. But the effect of music as an aid to worship depends entirely upon its character. If it be frivolous or flamboyant it will not stimulate religious emotion but recall secular associations. Any music which by its character or its mode of rendition suggests the concert room may be more or less successful as a way of entertaining the congregation, but will fail as an instrument for promoting the worship of God, the only legitimate reason for introducing it into the church at all.

Many music committees apparently fail to grasp this fundamental conception of the place of music in the church, and select the choir as they would pick singers for a concert. But the business of the organist and choir is not to please or entertain the congregation in the intervals between responsive psalm and prayer and sermon. It is as much out of place for the choir to address what it sings to the congregation as the minister to address his prayer to them instead of to God. The primary function of the choir is to lead the congregation in singing those parts of

the service in which the congregation can and should join, namely in the hymns, and in the chants and versicles if the service contain these elements. The secondary function of the choir is to heighten the religious appeal of the service by the use of appropriate music, such as anthems, too difficult for the congregation to sing. The reason why the music of the sixteenth century church of Western Europe, or of the modern Russian Church, is so appealing lies in the fact that it is a pure expression of religious emotion. The reason for the failure of so much of the music heard in Protestant churches is that such emotional appeal as it has is often of a secular rather than a sacred character, and because it is rendered as a concert to please the hearers instead of as an act of devotion. If the true function of music in the church service be thoroughly understood the music committee will be guided accordingly in its selection of organist and choir, and in its instructions to them.

The music committee.

The music committee, which should be elected by the parish at its annual meeting, is the responsible agent of the church in the engagement and control of the organist and choir. Some authorities advise that the minister should be given entire control of the music of the church, with authority over the choir. It is, indeed, essential that the minister should have direction of the conduct of the entire service of worship, but it is much better that he should have no responsibility for the selection or terms of employment of organist or singers. In many churches this is beyond his authority, since the employment and compensation of all persons paid by the church is legally in the hands of the parish alone, or of the trustees acting as their agents. Furthermore, the minister not infrequently is musically ignorant, and is not competent to select or instruct the organist or choir. The music committee should, therefore, be the intermediary between the church and the organist and choir, with authority to engage them upon terms either approved in advance or subject to confirmation by the trustees, and to dismiss them in case of

necessity. The music committee should lay down the general principles to which the music of the church should conform, and should be the channel through which alone all instructions to the organist, or criticisms of the music should pass. If members of the congregation do not like the soprano's voice, or the tenor's red necktie, or the modified ragtime which the organist played as a prelude to the service, they should not take their complaints to the minister and ask him to discipline the offending party, but should speak or write to the music committee.

The music committee should have its own budget, and should be empowered to spend at discretion the appropriation for the year. It should keep a record of its actions, and copies of any contracts, directions or correspondence passing between the committee and the organist and choir. It is well to have the committee made up of from three to five persons, representing in some measure what are likely to be the rather varying tastes of the congregation. Members of the committee do not need to be professional musicians, but they should at least be educated musically, and persons of good taste, having an intelligent understanding of how the music of the church can best be made to promote the spirit of worship. They should not be chosen merely because of social prominence, or with the hope that they will help to pay the choir. The minister should not be a member of the committee, but he may appropriately be invited to sit with it from time to time, especially when the budget for the year is made up, or when any change in the personnel of organist and choir is contemplated. He should be free at any time to communicate his wishes to the committee, and, though he has no authority either for the engagement or the discharge of the organist or any of the choir, and may not demand of them more service than their contract calls for, he has the right to ask the committee that the organist and choir be required to carry out his wishes in regard to the conduct of worship.

The organist.

The organist should be given entire control of the instrument which he plays, and no other person should be

allowed to use it without his permission. A good modern organ is a delicate and intricate affair easily put out of commission by careless or unskilled hands, and it is unfair to subject the organist to such risks of damage to the instrument for which he is responsible. If the services of another player are desired for some special occasion the consent of the organist should always first be obtained. In the case of his absence he should be allowed to choose his substitute, after consultation with the music committee.

The organist and choir-master are usually one and the same person, except in churches with a large choir which must be specially trained. In such churches there is often a choir-master in addition to the organist. In small churches it is often necessary to depend upon a volunteer musician for service as organist, and often such individuals render very faithful and devoted service to the church, accounting it as their way of serving God. But there are unavoidable limitations to volunteer service, however devoted, for the volunteer is almost always an amateur instead of a professional, and the amateur's training and technique are seldom equal to those of a professional musician. Therefore, when the finances of the church and the circumstances of the community permit, it is better for the church to employ a professional.

The music committee should never forget, however, that something more than technical ability to play an organ is required to make a good church organist. The organist, whether man or woman, must also be a person of good character, must have a sympathetic understanding of the service of worship in which he or she is to take part, and must be able to control the choir. The professional musician who regards the Sunday service simply as a pot-boiler which brings in a useful addition to his income, and whose only idea is to get through it with as little expenditure of time and trouble as possible, is likely to render service less satisfactory than that of a devoted amateur who may be quite inferior in technical training. The writer well remembers preaching in an attractive little church which had just been completed and which still lacked an organ,

so that the congregation was using a piano for its instrumental music. At the piano was a highly trained young musician connected with the department of music of a great university. Seldom have I heard church music worse rendered. His conception of the prelude and postlude was that of playing numbers on a concert program. It was quite obvious that he despised the hymn tunes as musically inferior, and he ran through them with entire indifference, much too fast to permit the congregation to sing well, treating them as pianoforte pieces. I have known many amateurs whose ability did not go much beyond the reverent rendition of a hymn tune who could have given that church far better service.

The choir.

Sometimes the choir is selected by the music committee. This is commonly the case where a single singer or a quartet is employed. Where there is a boy choir or a mixed chorus, it is commonly better to let the choir-master pick his own singers, subject to the terms of employment laid down by the music committee. In every case the choir-master should be responsible for the maintenance of discipline in such matters as prompt and regular attendance at rehearsals and service, and quiet and decorous behavior while in the church. Where there is a large choir the choir-master will probably need the service of an assistant to act as secretary in checking up attendance and payments. One of the older members of the choir can be employed for this service at a slight addition to his salary.

Types of choir.

The kind of choir used in any given church will depend in the first place upon the form of service used, and in the second place upon how much money the church has to spend upon its music. In the Russian Church the Divine Liturgy is sung by an unseen chorus of men's voices unaccompanied by any instrument, with magnificent effect in the great churches which, before the Revolution, maintained large choirs. A large proportion of the small Protestant churches in this country go to the other extreme

and have no choir at all. In such case the music is, of course, limited to the congregational singing of a few hymns led by an organist playing a small instrument. Congregational singing can be greatly improved when circumstances permit the employment of a precentor whose primary business is to lead the congregation in its singing, but who should also be able to sing an occasional solo-anthem. A good baritone voice is the best for this purpose.

Throughout the nineteenth century the great majority of Protestant churches which could afford to spend money for singers were in the habit of employing quartets, which became the typical church choir. Not infrequently, of course, the members of the quartet were devout Christians—perhaps members of the church—as well as good musicians moved by high ideals. Nevertheless the effect of the professional quartet upon church music was bad because it begot mischievous ideas as to the function of music in the church. Generally speaking the excellence of the music was estimated by the size of the salaries paid to the quartet, it being rashly assumed that the higher the pay the better was the music procured, although, as a matter of fact, much of the best church music cannot be properly rendered by a quartet. The result of that system was the church concert. Congregational singing was discouraged that the congregation might get its money's worth in listening to the singers who were paid to worship God for it, an arrangement no more logical than the employment of hired mourners at a funeral. As many elaborate anthems were used as could be woven into the service. The writer recalls one church where this system was in vogue, in which no member of the congregation ever ventured to open his lips during the "musical numbers on the program" until the closing hymn just before the benediction, when at last the worshipers were permitted to pour out in song what hearts they had left in them.

Fortunately for the spirit of worship the quartet choir made up of professional singers is increasingly a thing of the past. With the passing of this outworn and inadequate conception of church music, the quartet has in many cases

been replaced by a chorus choir. In the Protestant Episcopal Church this is usually a boy choir. There is much to be said for this form of choir, but it calls for a skilful choir-master who is a sound disciplinarian. Another form of chorus choir is that of male adult voices, twenty to thirty in number. A well trained chorus of such voices is very impressive, especially in the rendition of the sixteenth century and the modern Russian church music, which was written for just such choirs, but the amount of such music available for the modern Protestant church is very limited, and the adult male chorus is hardly adapted to the ordinary parish church. For most churches which can pay a moderate sum for their music a mixed chorus of men and women of from twenty to thirty voices offers the most satisfactory results, especially if it can be largely recruited from the membership of the church itself. In a chorus of that size it is not necessary that the singers should have voices of more than very moderate quality, although it is, of course, an advantage to have three or four singers who are good enough to sing at least simple solo parts occasionally. The large majority of the choir, however, need only a modest equipment in technique and voice, and they can easily be trained to lead the congregation in a good rendition of hymns, chants and versicles, and they can learn a sufficient number of good simple anthems in the course of a year.

Unless the choir is made up wholly of volunteers it is better that all should be paid a modest sum, on a uniform basis, except that a few voices competent to sing solo parts may be paid more than the others. There should be a scale of deductions for absence from rehearsals or services. Such a chorus choir will prove far more satisfactory than the old-time quartet, often at a smaller expense. In a large church it is possible to develop more than one such choir. There may be, for example, a senior choir, which is that ordinarily employed for the regular church service; a junior choir made up of young people who usually sing at the young people's meetings; and a Sunday-School choir made up of children. On special occasions these choirs can be massed in the church, and members of the two younger

choirs will naturally pass in the course of time into the senior choir.

*The location of the choir.*¹

The location of the choir in the church building will depend upon the architecture of the edifice and upon its form of worship. In a Gothic church the singers will naturally be placed in that part of the edifice called the "choir," which they will enter and leave during the processional and recessional hymns. Nowadays many Episcopal churches of Georgian or Romanesque architecture have been remodeled so as to allow the placing of the choir in the chancel. The normal location of the choir in a Georgian church, however, is with the organ in a choir loft at the opposite end of the church from the pulpit. When so located the choir can seldom reach it by marching in during a processional hymn, but ordinarily assembles in the choir loft before the service begins. Some choir lofts are so built so as to admit of only a few singers, making it difficult to place a chorus choir in them.

An arrangement common in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was to place the organ and choir either directly behind or alongside the minister. Where a choir is so located some form of processional and recessional entrance may be practicable, otherwise the choir should be in their places several minutes before the service begins, so that they may not come straggling in after a large proportion of the worshiping congregation is assembled.

The robed choir.

Where the choir is in plain sight of the congregation, and especially where processionals are used, it is highly desirable that the choir should be robed. In Protestant Episcopal churches it is the established custom to dress organist and choir in black cassocks and white surplices. There is no reason why other Protestant churches should not adopt the same costume. The cassock and surplice are simply relics of the dress of early Christians which have survived to our own day. Where such garments are accounted too eccle-

¹ See also pp. 77-78.

siastical black stuff gowns of an academic type may be worn instead. It is not a question of introducing the use of ecclesiastical millinery into the church, but simply the provision of a uniform costume for its value in adding to the dignity of the service and in obliterating individual idiosyncrasies. Anyone who has contrasted a file of rookies drilling in their variegated civilian dress with an equal number of soldiers in uniform knows how much the uniform adds to the dignity of a group of individuals moving together. Similarly a choir marching into church, or standing in sight of a congregation to sing, will be greatly improved in appearance if they are clothed in uniform attire. The unduly elaborate dress and picture hat of the soprano will disappear; the woman whose Sunday dress is very plain will be on an equal footing with her neighbors. If the choir is robed it will be easy to request the members to wear black and white clothing beneath their gowns and to eliminate any gay colors incompatible with the austere dignity of the uniform costume. Where there is a rooted objection to such a uniform dress for the choir, it is at least desirable to request the choir to dress very simply in black and white, and to avoid anything which calls undue attention to the personality of the individual, but such suggestion should be made when the singers are engaged rather than afterwards, when the suggestion is liable to be interpreted as a criticism. Of course all the arguments for putting a choir into a uniform costume apply equally to the minister, whom it is also an advantage to have habitually dressed in either the cassock and surplice of the older usage, or the black silk "Geneva" gown of the Puritan tradition, while conducting worship.

The minister's relation to organist and choir.

The principle was laid down in the second section of this chapter that the minister should be responsible for the direction of the entire service of worship. This includes the right to determine the points at which music is required, the general character of the music to be used, and the selection of the hymns. Such measure of control is essential if the service is to be a unified whole, each element

therein being coördinated with the rest to form an integral composition.

It is obviously important that the minister should be on terms of friendly understanding with his organist and choir, and that they should feel that the social life and the religious opportunities of the church are fully open to them. The minister should make clear to them his conception of worship, with the object of securing the fullest measure of coöperation from them. He should attend choir rehearsals occasionally, and should regard both organist and choir as his partners in the high office of leading public worship. If the organist and choir are volunteers the minister should not forget that they are giving their services as their contribution to the church life. If they are paid the minister should remember that they, like himself, have professional standards which should be respected.

The minister should also have frequent and regular conferences with his organist that together they may plan for the coming services. Such conferences may well take place at least once a month. In a large and busy church it is desirable that the minister and the organist should meet oftener, perhaps each week. At such meetings the minister should lay before the organist full information as to the services scheduled for the period under consideration, indicating the type of music which will be appropriate to each occasion and to the theme of his sermon, and discussing any other points which may need to be considered. Such coöperation is essential if the music is to fulfill its true function in the service of worship.

In the selection of music the general principle to be observed is that where instrumental music alone is concerned the selection thereof should be left to the organist, after the general character of music needed for any given service has been indicated, but that in the case of vocal music the words to be sung should be the primary consideration and should therefore be selected by the minister, the organist being responsible for the musical settings. If the organist is a well-trained professional of good taste and sound musical standards, he should be given a free hand in the selection of organ pieces and musical settings. Very

few ministers have had sufficient musical education to be able to form a judgment concerning the excellence of an unfamiliar piece of church music. The wise minister, therefore, recognizing his own limitations in this matter, will realize that his personal likes and dislikes are merely idiosyncrasies of taste. In order adequately to supervise the choice of words to be sung, however, the minister should have on file a complete set of anthems available for use by his choir, and he should go over them with his organist occasionally to eliminate such as have proved unsuitable, and to add others that may be desired. No anthems should be used which are not a natural and fitting expression of the worship of the congregation, and in accord with the theological position of the church. All anthems should be selected by the minister and organist in consultation, primarily with a view to the significance of the words to be sung, taking care that they are suitable to the particular occasion, thus avoiding an unhappy effect sometimes produced by a careless organist from a haphazard selection in total disregard of appropriateness to the particular occasion or to the theme of the minister's sermon. The same principle applies even more strongly to the hymns. They should always be chosen for their words rather than for their music. Under ordinary circumstances they should be sung to the tune to which they are set in the hymn book, but where there is a choice of tunes the selection of the music should be left to the organist, after consultation with the minister. The minister, remembering his responsibility as the leader of worship, should be careful to select his hymns and to indicate his preference as regards anthems in ample time for the choir practice each week. If he neglects to do so he has only himself to blame should the choir sing an inappropriate anthem on Sunday, and the organist bring him just before service a list of hymns which the choir has practiced and which the minister is requested to announce.

The congregation should be strongly encouraged to join heartily in all the hymns, chants and versicles. These elements in the service should, therefore, be sung at a moderate speed, with careful attention to the meaning of the words,

without “shading,” or any unexpected modulations of the organ. So far as possible familiar hymn tunes should be used, and simple, standard chants sung Sunday after Sunday, new tunes or chants being only occasionally introduced.

CHAPTER XII

CHURCH ADVERTISING

Shall the church advertise?

The modern art of advertising in the commercial world is an outgrowth of the great business expansion of the last half-century. It has developed a highly specialized technique in the hands of experts, who have replaced the simple methods of our grandfathers by carefully studied appeals which aim not merely to inform possible purchasers where they can procure the goods which they need, but to stimulate in them a demand for articles which they had not intended to purchase. Until the last fifteen or twenty years the churches lagged far behind commerce in the use of advertising, and today many churches still follow only the simplest forms of publicity. There are many people to whom the idea of advertising the church is repugnant, and whose dislike thereof has been intensified by samples which they have seen. Some of the earlier books on the subject urged the application to church publicity of some of the more startling, not to say blatant, methods of business advertising, and the jargon of the commercial salesman has been used by religious promoters in a way to irritate and disgust devout and sensitive souls. Those who were jealous for the dignity and sanctity of religion could not bear to see it hawked about, like the wares of the market-place. Such advertising cheapens religion, and does not in the long run help the church. This sentiment the writer in great measure shares. Much of the church advertising of today is repellent rather than attractive, or, at least, is better adapted to draw a crowd of curiosity-seekers than to build up a congregation of worshipers. It is often based on a theory which seems psychologically

false. Nevertheless, the objection lies not against church publicity in itself, but rather against unsuitable methods which have been used. It is not a question as to whether the church should advertise, but of how it should advertise.

Traditional ways of attracting attention.

In point of fact the church has taken care to proclaim its presence to the community ever since it emerged from the secrecy of the catacombs. Church-builders have always sought a conspicuous site, and have generally raised a structure which towered above the surrounding houses, with a heaven-pointing spire to catch the passer's eye and bells to call the devout to worship. This was sufficient publicity when there was but one church in the village and the movement of population was slight. But with the growth of huge cities and the multiplication of denominations the number of churches increased so that even the citizens needed information as to the identity of this or that house of worship, while the fluidity of modern population has brought into town and city multitudes wholly ignorant of the location and character of its churches. Under these conditions the importance of a strategic site remains as great as ever, and a spire is still of value where not overshadowed and dwarfed by business structures, but the church-bell has been for the most part silenced because its clangor adds to the noise and confusion of the city streets. To these age-old methods of attracting attention the modern church has, therefore, added various other ways both of keeping touch with its own constituency and of drawing in newcomers.

It has had its pulpit announcements; its bulletin board on the church front, giving at least the name of the church and the hours of service; and, since the advent of the modern newspaper, its notice in the church column in the press. In a modern community this is not only legitimate and proper—it is essential. The only question is how best to present the appeal of the church to the community. It is all very well to say that people should of their own volition seek out the kind of church which meets their needs and that the church should not try to draw them in by

“offering attractions.” But in practice the stranger in a large town or city must be given every reasonable assistance in finding the church of his choice, and there is historic justification for seeking out people in the byways and hedges with invitations to come in.

The type of appeal.

In planning the advertising for a church the first point to consider is the section of the public which the church desires to interest and attract. While in a sense it is true that the church seeks all men, and while in a rural or village community which is fairly homogeneous in character a single church may serve the whole community, in towns and cities with mixed population of widely divergent tastes and interests no single church ever will or can appeal to all sorts and conditions of men. People will be drawn to this or that church in the social groups into which they naturally fall; by their likes and dislikes as to different types of service; or in accordance with their theological convictions and their taste in preaching. The same publicity which attracts one sort of people to a given church may turn away another type. Each church must, therefore, study its natural constituency, and must ask what kind of publicity will be likely to reach the group for whom its worship has the most effective appeal. A church with a stately service, a thoughtful preacher, and music of high quality, will never draw people who like florid or popular music, sensational preaching and what is called “a bright, cheery service.” The advertising of each church must truthfully indicate the type of church that it is, and the kind of service which the visitor may expect to find there. Furthermore, it must always be remembered that while a vigorous advertising campaign may induce people to visit a church once or twice, no amount of advertising will hold them. That can only be done if the church fulfills its promises and actually gives them what it professes to offer and what they want.

The church year-book and calendar.

The printed church calendar and the church year-book are the best methods for keeping parishioners informed as to what is going on in the church. The year-book, with its annual report of the minister, of the treasurer and of the secretaries of various church organizations, is practicable only in large city churches with a considerable income. It is useful as a record and a reference book in the relatively few churches which can afford it, but it has only a negligible advertising value. The weekly or monthly church calendar is, however, within the capacity of town and village churches with a modest income and is valuable for them as well as for city churches. When simple, concise and attractively printed, it is worth all its costs. It should contain notices of all the parish activities for the week or month, and it should be an established policy in the church that the minister shall give out no notices from the pulpit during the service except in case of emergency. A string of notices about all sorts of subjects, some of them trivial and some only remotely connected with church work, seriously detracts from the continuity and dignity of worship. The reading of such notices is an ineffective and very primitive method of publicity, since it reaches only those within hearing and often finds them inattentive. It encourages people in slipshod habits of sending hastily scrawled notes to the pulpit at the last moment, and it is liable to abuse, since many people will impose upon the good will of the minister to secure a cheap publicity for objects which have no legitimate claim upon either him or the congregation. These difficulties can be avoided by a regular monthly, or better, a weekly calendar, if the minister will require all notices of parish activities to be announced therein and will resolutely refuse to read any notices from the pulpit, except when some change in the announcement already printed makes such action imperative. The calendar has the additional advantage of providing much better publicity than the spoken notice, since it can speak to those absent from church as well as to those present; it can answer many questions about which people

must otherwise make inquiry; and it can be edited so as to avoid the clumsy phraseology and the inaccuracies characteristic of so many church notices.

The calendar should be printed each week in time to be mailed to all parishioners for delivery on Saturday morning, or, if printed monthly, for delivery towards the end of the week preceding the first Sunday in the month, and additional copies should be kept in the pews for the period which the calendar covers. Out-of-date calendars should invariably be collected and destroyed; not left in the seats in a slovenly clutter. Merely to distribute the calendar at church instead of sending it through the mails is to lose half its value. If mailed it serves as a reminder of the church to those who live at some distance, or who are inclined to be indifferent, serving to keep the church in remembrance. One-cent envelopes can be used if a distinctive wording or device on the envelope clearly indicates that it comes from the church, so that it will not be thrown into the scrap basket, unopened, as advertising matter. The addressing of the envelopes will be simplified by the use of an addressograph. The minister should have general supervision of the calendar, and the final decision as to what should be included therein, but the work of editing and circulating it should be taken off his shoulders by a competent office secretary, or by a publicity committee or an individual layman of experience in such matters. The first page of the calendar should always include the official name of the church, its location (street and town), and the minister's name, address, and telephone number. An attractive picture of the church, or of some part thereof, is also highly desirable, since four people will pick up and examine an illustrated leaflet to one who will look at plain printed matter. The second page should contain information as to services of worship; the third page, general parish notices; the fourth page, the names and addresses of the church officers, and of the organist and sexton, including the telephone numbers of the last two. A uniform style of print and paper should be adopted and adhered to, distinctive but not bizarre, with a type as clear and easily read as possible. If left to his

own devices many a printer will produce grotesque effects by using half a dozen different fonts of type on a single page.

Bulletin boards.

The calendar and year-book are chiefly valuable as a means of keeping contact with persons already connected with a church, or, at least, already interested in some measure. They are almost valueless in attracting the attention of others. The bulletin board, outside the church, however, (as distinguished from a notice board inside the church vestibule), is an appeal to the passer-by. Its primary function is to inform the public as to the identity of the church and the hours of public worship. This was unnecessary in small, long-settled, slow-moving communities, where practically everyone attended some church within easy walking distance of his home, but it is essential in any growing city or town. No parish committee ought ever to assume that its church is so long-established and so prominent that everybody knows all about it. The writer well recalls a conversation with a committee of the First Church in an old New England town which had developed into a thriving little city with a fine college. The handsome old church stood in a green, well back from the main street, without a sign of any sort to indicate what it was or whether services were ever held therein. To the suggestion that a bulletin board near the sidewalk would be useful, the committee replied that it was quite unnecessary because everybody in town knew all about the First Church. All the old families probably did, but it was safe to say that four persons out of five who passed that church were either recent settlers in town, or college students from a distance to whom the First Church meant nothing whatsoever. It is true that Roman Catholics place no boards outside their churches, not even to give the name of the church and that of its rector, but a Roman church is usually easy to identify by its architecture, and it has its own ways of keeping touch with its constituents. No Protestant church, however, even if it is the only one in the village, should be without a bulletin board, giving at least the name of the

church and the hours of service. The addition of the name of the minister is ordinarily desirable. A board so far from the sidewalk, or with such small lettering as not to be legible by the passer-by, is almost useless. It is not sufficient that the information should be available for the person who takes the trouble to stop and hunt for it. The wording on the bulletin board should be of such character that the passer-by cannot help seeing it—so clear and simple that he who runs may read it at one glance. Therefore it must be near the sidewalk, on posts if the wall of the church is set back from the street more than ten or fifteen feet; it must be sufficiently elevated to be seen over the heads of others, but not so high as to require much raising of the eyes; it must carry no more wording than is essential, and that in letters large enough to be read by good eyes across a street of moderate width; the lettering must stand out from the background, either of the board itself or of the church wall, with sufficient distinctness to catch the eye of the passer, especially if the church be located on a busy city street with its countless other distractions. There are innumerable varieties of bulletin boards—the old-fashioned black sanded board with small gold letters; the yellow varnished board with red or black painted letters, which came next; the commercial boards with glazed cover and movable metal letters, white on black or black on white; boards to which cardboard sheets with painted notices can be attached. The old-fashioned ones were generally ineffective; the modern ones are often ugly and inartistic. The best compromise is probably a bulletin board designed by the architect of the church, with the standing information painted on the frame, and glass covered spaces for standard-sized advertising cards to be inserted week by week, to give current information. Gold letters on black, or black on natural wood, are much less visible than white on black, while black letters on a white ground most readily catch the eye. On artistic grounds there may be objections to a square of white against the stone or brick wall of the church, but the eye of the passer will instinctively turn to that white spot, and will read what is printed thereon if the lettering is clear and simple

and the notice no longer than the four or five words which the eye ordinarily seizes at a glance. More than that requires conscious prolongation of the attention, so that to crowd the board with information is to diminish the chances of its being read by the quick passer-by.

Newspaper notices.

Another familiar method of church advertising is the church-notice column in the Saturday night or Sunday morning papers. Most churches in towns and cities use this form of publicity, not so much for the information of their own constituents as for the outside public, the floating and unchurched population. Formerly it was the custom for each church to buy such space as it could afford and to put in its own notice, whether in the form of a simple statement as to the hours of service and name of the minister, or more detailed information as to the sermon topic and the music to be rendered, ending with a general invitation to all and sundry. The present tendency is for all the churches in a town, or, in large cities, all the churches of a given denomination, to unite in buying space which is then apportioned among them. Such coöperative advertising is more economical.

It is a common modern practice for the minister to advertise the subject of his sermon in the church calendar, in the press and on the bulletin board. Advertising experts recommend this practice, and it is possible that some persons are drawn to church by their desire to hear this or that topic discussed. The practice is also defended on the ground that many regular parishioners who may be unable to come every Sunday like to know what the minister is to talk about and will make an especial effort to get out when subjects of interest to them are announced. In spite of this prevalent practice in most Protestant churches, the writer believes it to be psychologically false. So good a student of popular psychology as Henry Ward Beecher would never advertise his sermon topics. To do so places an undue emphasis on the preacher and his message. The fundamental purpose of a church service is the worship of Almighty God, and the personality of the preacher ought

to be subordinated to that end. The minister is not in the position of a lecturer, who draws only by virtue of his ability to please or entertain, or by interest in his subject. Advertising of sermon subjects tends to the development of the bad habit of looking down the column of service announcements on Sunday morning to see what attractions are announced, as one might scan the theater column on a Saturday evening. It encourages church vagrants, who go from church to church, according to the music and preaching offered. That is not the way to build up a stable congregation. It is noteworthy that the Roman Catholic churches very seldom advertise the preacher, or the sermon topic, except for special occasions, such as "missions." Most Protestant Episcopal churches are also very reticent in such advertising. But both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Episcopal churches have, at least in many dioceses, a very efficient publicity service which keeps the newspapers supplied with a constant stream of information as to church happenings. Furthermore, the advertising of sermon subjects often tends to sensationalism. Many great sermon topics do not readily lend themselves to titles which will attract attention, and, on the other hand, the minister is always tempted to put too much thought into phrasing a catchy title, startling or alliterative, and not enough thought into the sermon itself. There is also the danger of unintended effect. A well known church in Boston a few years ago startled passers-by by announcing:

Morning Service: Hell and Who Will Be There.

Evening Service: Lord, Send Me.

Another church is said to have proclaimed the following:

Morning Service: The Pastor Will Preach.

Evening Service: What the Fool Said.

The real trouble with sensational preaching is its tendency to sink to trivial and unworthy subjects instead of dealing with the great problems of religious life and thought. The sermon subjects announced by some minis-

ters give superabundant evidence of this. There is the minister who, during the baseball season, preaches on "Play Ball!" Another announces "Hobble Skirts" as his topic; another, "Simon Says 'Thumbs Up!'" ; another, "Good-by, God, I've Gone to California." A local newspaper in New England a few years ago published the following item:

"The program for the evening [at a certain church] included the usual enthusiastic song service, a trombone solo by ———, and a short address by the pastor on 'Blowing Your Own Horn.' [Presumably a delicate tribute to the trombone soloist!] Next Sunday the pastor speaks on the subject—the fourth in the series on the Sermon On The Mount—'I Should Worry.' "

Could anything short of actual blasphemy do more to debase the beauty and dignity of religion, or more effectively turn people of intelligence and of reverent spirit away from the church?

A similar criticism applies to most advertisements of church music. It is appropriate to include in the calendar information as to the music to be used in the order of worship, since many of the congregation like to have the words of the anthem before them or to be able to identify a familiar chant or organ prelude. But detailed advertising of the "musical program," including the names of the singers, whether in the press or on the bulletin board, is again psychologically false, so far as the usual Sunday service is concerned. The people who are drawn by it come as to a free concert, rather than to a house of worship, and can seldom be built into the body of the church. While such advertising may draw a crowd, it is very questionable whether it will ever form a congregation.

Advertising the minister.

The experts on commercial advertising often urge the necessity of advertising the minister for the sake of his church. If the minister be a striking personality he may, indeed, find it impossible to keep himself out of the public print, but the practice of deliberately exploiting him as

part of the advertising campaign of his church is to be condemned as highly objectionable. The tendency of some Protestant ministers to make use of the press in advertising themselves produces numerous gross instances of unprofessional conduct. The accepted codes of ethics in law and medicine forbid the lawyer or the doctor to advertise, or to procure for themselves, either directly or indirectly, any publicity eulogizing their professional achievements. The ministry greatly needs a similar rule.

There is, of course, a legitimate use of the press in giving public information as to the activities of a given church, and the minister's name cannot be altogether excluded from such press reports, whether in the daily papers or in denominational weeklies. The minister should always remember, however, that the purpose of such reports is not to advertise himself but to give the public needed information about the church. If he prepares the reports himself he should not mention himself unless the situation requires it, and should then limit himself to a plain statement of facts, unembellished by laudatory comments. If the reports are prepared by others he should require them to obey the same rule. In every case the publicity is to be sought for the church, and not for the man.

It is legitimate for the minister to furnish information about himself to the press on occasions when the public is entitled to it—as when he accepts a call to, or resigns from a given parish. Often he alone can state the facts accurately, and in such instances he should give the papers a clear, concise statement, in writing, of the outstanding facts of his career, but without embellishment, and without headlines, which the editors will write in any case. It is not unprofessional for him also to furnish a photograph if asked for it. In theory such action is open to objection, but in practice it is a mode of self-protection, since if he does not furnish the desired material some unscrupulous paper is liable to invent a career for him and to “fake” a photograph.

It is not unprofessional for the minister from time to time to send to the press a summary of his own sermons, either by request or on his own initiative, when they deal

with topics of genuine public interest, or matters to which public attention may properly be called, but he should be scrupulous in not demanding more than his fair share of newspaper space. It is better for him to make his own summary of his sermon than to trust to a reporter, but the minister must not introduce any laudatory remarks about himself. Similarly, he may give an interview to the press if requested to do so, on some subject of public policy or morals, or he may write letters to the press as a means of influencing public opinion. But he will do well to insist that the interview be written out and approved by him before publication; he must be careful in the case of controversial topics to make it clear that he is expressing only a personal opinion, and is not speaking for his church as a whole where he has no right thus to speak; he should beware of overestimating or of undermining his influence by too frequent interviews or published letters; and he must never use interviews or letters merely as a means of keeping himself before the public.

While the use of the press in the foregoing ways is legitimate, the minister must always remember that its sole justification is the interest of his church or of some cause of public morality—never the exploitation of his personality or the spread of his own fame. For himself he may “not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.” His best work is done noiselessly, without the slightest regard to public fame. He should dread praise more than blame. Therefore, it is unprofessional for him to seek newspaper publicity on any and every possible occasion. If, for instance, he is to speak at some church convention, he should not send press notices and photographs of himself in advance to the newspapers of the city in which the convention is to be held. The publicity for such occasions is usually in the hands of a denominational or local publicity agent, and the individual minister should provide the press with no information about himself save at the request of the authorized agent. If any distinction comes to him—an honorary degree, an invitation to occupy a famous pulpit—it is improper for him to seize the opportunity to “write up a story” about himself for the news-

paper in his home town, that he may be thereby glorified. Still worse is it for him to invent "news" about himself—to spread a rumor that he is about to be called to, or has refused a call from this or that conspicuous pulpit, when in fact the call has not been given him.

It is a gross breach of ethics for the minister to write up anonymous "puffs" about himself, intended to advance his professional reputation. An instance of such ethical blindness occurred a few years ago in one of our large cities. A certain clergyman greatly desired to be elected bishop of a neighboring diocese. He was one of the prominent candidates for the position, but was opposed by many church people on the ground of the heterodoxy of his opinions. He had had occasion from time to time to write unsigned editorials for the leading local newspaper, which was entirely legitimate, but on this occasion he wrote an editorial strongly commending himself for the bishopric and defending his own orthodoxy, and took it to the city editor with the request that he publish it. The editor was not a church member, but he had his own standards of ethics and was profoundly shocked at the immorality of the proceeding, and quite properly refused to use the editorial. The clergyman did not attain the desired honor. More naïve, but equally disgraceful ways of obtaining personal notoriety appear from time to time in the papers. A few years ago an item was widely published in the daily press in which a certain minister publicly boasted of his own "press-agent stunts." Among other things he told of how a nine-year-old boy had fallen off a pier into a certain lake and of how he himself had then rushed into the water, a little above his knees, dragged the boy out, and had permitted the newspapers to "write it up" as a thrilling rescue, thus attracting attention to himself and to his church! This parson obviously missed his vocation. He should have been a hero of the "movies." More recently we were informed by the press that "the Rev. ———, pastor of a church in ———, ate twenty-three pancakes at a pancake supper and thus vanquished Mrs. ———, president of the Ladies' Aid Society, who, even for the sake of the building fund, could only swallow twenty. Thus lively interest in the church work

was awakened in ——— and more than \$25 was added to the fund!"

Men who have no more appreciation than this of the honor and dignity of a minister in the Church of Christ ought to be promptly deposed. Happily they are few in number.

The publicity committee.

To secure effective publicity the work should be in the hands of an experienced individual, or of a working committee. The minister should not be expected to serve as publicity agent for his own church, though he should be a member of the committee, or be in constant touch with the individual agent. The responsible agent or committee should have charge of the calendar, press notices and bulletin board, and ought to confer with the minister each week as to procedure. To be effective, publicity must be worked out in ample season. Timeliness is of prime importance. If, for example, a given church is planning to hold a series of special afternoon or evening services, it should not wait until the last moment before making its announcements. Weeks of preparation are often necessary. The announcements must be formulated and printed, mailing lists revised, and "copy" prepared for the press. This should all be done well in advance, so that the information may be released in time for it to filter into the consciousness of the public. It should also be remembered that reiteration is one of the great secrets of advertising. Most people will pay little attention to the first notice unless it be about something in which they are already interested. They need to have the matter brought to their attention several times, and in different ways.

In making use of the press the minister, or the responsible publicity agent of the church, should always cultivate acquaintanceship with the editors, particularly the city editors, of the local newspapers. He will generally find them friendly and ready to coöperate if he proves considerate of them. That consideration should show itself in the following ways. He must not be greedy in asking for too much space; he must not expect them to send for news on

the mere chance of getting some, but must send to them in good season what he wants printed, clearly typewritten, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only; he must not expect them to print everything he sends—they can use it only if it is real “news” dealing with matters of public interest, and when it is not crowded out by other, and what the editor deems to be more important, news. It will often pay the minister to telephone to the city editor a couple of days in advance, to say that a sermon or address on such and such a topic is to be given, and to ask if the paper would not like a report of it, delivered for release at a given hour. Finally, he must leave to the editor his recognized right of writing the headlines. Very often they will not be what the minister would have chosen; they may seriously distort his meaning, but that is one of the perils of publicity. He must be content if the paper prints unchanged, or but little abbreviated, the summary which he has prepared. That, at least, will be more accurate than the hasty notes of a “cub” reporter, unfamiliar with the whole subject.

The advertisement of a loyal congregation.

After all, the very best church advertising is that done by the whole congregation when it is enthusiastic over its church, and proud of what it stands for in the community. Nobody wants to join a church for which its members are always apologizing, for whose minister they are making excuses, in which they do not like to acknowledge membership. It is told of a certain New York church which, a good many years ago, called a new minister, that a critic said to one of the trustees, “Well, I don’t think your new minister is a great preacher!” “No,” was the reply, “not yet; but we are going to make him a great preacher.” And they did, by their loyal and enthusiastic support.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CHURCH AND THE STRANGER

The church and the stranger.

Criticism of the church for its coldness toward strangers, especially when they are poorly clad or unprepossessing in appearance, is no new thing. Indeed it is almost as old as Christianity itself, for in the Epistle of James we read, "My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . with respect of persons. For if there come into your synagogue a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, and there come in also a poor man in vile clothing; and ye have regard to him that weareth the fine clothing, and say, Sit thou here in a good place; and ye say to the poor man, Stand thou there, or sit under my footstool; are ye not divided in your own mind, and become judges with evil thoughts?"¹ Evidently in the apostolic church the practice had already arisen of showing the more presentable members of the congregation to the front pews. Such discrimination has always been disapproved by the better mind of the church as being contrary to the spirit of Christ, even in those periods when the church has been most inclined to a weak compliance with worldliness.

So far as hospitality to the stranger is concerned, both the Roman Catholic and the Eastern churches have usually been more free from just ground for criticism than most of the Protestant churches. In the Russian Church, for example, there are no seats, except perhaps little stools for the infirm and aged, and in the pre-Revolutionary days princes and peasants, clerks and great ladies stood or knelt throughout the Divine Liturgy, side by side, without the slightest discrimination on account of rank, wealth or occu-

¹ James ii, 1-4.

pation. The only concession was a slight railing enclosing a small space for members of the imperial family. The Roman Church has also held, at least in theory, to the equality of all men in the sight of God.²

The practice of some Protestant churches offers a painful contrast. Many an old Anglican church has its squire's pew, comfortably fitted up for the occupancy of the patron of the living. And one of the worst features of a proprietary church, or of rented pews, is the almost inevitable tendency for the pew owner or renter to claim exclusive right of occupancy, even to the point of ejecting the stranger who unwittingly trespasses upon his preserve.

In recent days there have been a number of cases in our larger cities in which investigators have dressed themselves rather shabbily and gone the rounds of the better-known churches of the community to see to what extent they are following the apostolic injunction, writing up their findings as newspaper stories. Generally they report a courteous reception. But every church needs constantly to bear in mind the question of its attitude towards the stranger. The ideal ought to be that laid down in the Rule of St. Benedict for the reception of strangers at the monastery: "All guests shall be received as though they were Christ himself, for he himself said, 'I was a stranger and ye took me in.' Chiefly in the reception of poor and of pilgrims shall care be most anxiously exhibited, for in them is Christ received the more."³

Hospitality to the stranger is fundamentally dependent upon the spirit of the congregation, all the members of which should remember that though the church building may be theirs in a legal sense, it is also, and in a larger sense, the house of God, in which no human soul should be a stranger. Every visitor should therefore be thought of as the guest of the church, and made welcome as such. A very few acts of rudeness will give a church a bad name, whereas the habit of simple courtesy will bring it a reputation for friendliness.

² Gregory, "Regulæ Pastoralis Liber," Part II, Chap. VI.

³ Rule of St. Benedict, Section 53, trans. E. F. Henderson.

Reception of strangers.

It is not enough, however, that the congregation should mean well. In a well organized parish good intentions must find definite channels of expression. The stranger at the door should be met by a competent and courteous usher and shown as promptly as possible to a seat. It is far better for the young laymen of the parish to serve as ushers, each on a given Sunday in the month, under the direction of a head usher who is responsible for the oversight of this work, than for the parish to depend upon a paid sexton who is humanly liable to be obsequious to his employers—the parishioners—and rude to strangers. Furthermore, the stranger is more likely to feel that he is welcome if he is met at the door by a member of the church family instead of by a paid employee. Ushering is one of the best ways in which a young man can make his contribution of personal service to the church, and it is better to leave the sexton free to attend to his duties as caretaker, such as ringing the bell, supervising the furnace, and opening or shutting the windows. In a church in which pews are owned or rented, and must therefore be reserved, at least until the hour of service, a reasonable number of good pews should be kept in the hands of the parish for the use of visitors so that they may not be kept waiting at the church door, perhaps for many minutes, while the church members pass in to their seats. Nothing so quickly persuades the stranger that he is not wanted as to be kept waiting unnecessarily. If the service has begun the usher should give the visitor, as he is seated, a service book open at the right place. At the close of worship the ushers can often with advantage speak to the visitors whom they have seated, inviting them to come again.

The hospitality committee.

Besides the corps of ushers there should be a formally appointed committee on hospitality, including both men and middle-aged or elderly women, the number dependent upon the size and location of the parish. The members of this committee, which may well include some of the ushers,

should be selected from regular attendants at church, chosen for their ability to approach strangers easily and pleasantly. Their first duty is to speak to visitors after the service—nothing more than a brief pleasant word to the entire stranger, unless he or she evinces a desire for further acquaintance. Frequently the stranger desires to go out quickly without being stopped, and nothing will so deter such a visitor from returning to the church as to be set upon by several persons eager to shake his hand and to exact from him a promise to appear again the next Sunday. A friendly nod and a “Glad to see you; hope you’ll come again,” from one person is enough unless the visitor evidently desires further converse. If he comes a second or third time, a member of the committee on hospitality may ask if he would not like to meet the minister, or may talk with him about becoming a regular attendant. When that stage has been reached the second duty of the hospitality committee is to see that the newcomer and his family are called upon at their house, not simply by the minister or the parish assistant, but by one or more of the laymen or women of the church. This is particularly important in the case of strangers in the community, with few or no social contacts, for whom the social life of the church may offer a valued outlet from loneliness and isolation. It is important, however, that such calling should be done by more than one person, and by such as through common tastes and interests or proximity of habitation are most likely to offer congenial friendship. Such calling should also, of course, be done promptly in the case of newcomers who bring letters and intend to join the parish.

The minister at the door.

There is another form of church hospitality, now much in vogue, but of doubtful value; namely, the practice of the minister going to the door to shake hands with the people as they pass out. This practice is approved by many persons, perhaps desired by many congregations, yet it seems to rest upon a mistaken theory. It savors too much of the professional “glad hand.” From the point

of view of the minister it is not a natural proceeding. It emphasizes his personality and carries the implication that the congregation have been his guests to whom he is saying farewell. If he does that why should he not also be at the door to greet them on entering? Some months ago, one pleasant spring Sunday, I passed a well known city church about fifteen minutes before the hour of service. There stood the rector just outside the door, in cassock and biretta, with a smile and a handshake for everyone coming up the steps. I do not know whether that is his practice each week, or whether he merely happened to be there that morning, but his action, save for his genial smile, bore an uncomfortable resemblance to that of a certain type of undertaker who acts as it were on behalf of the corpse in welcoming those who come to the funeral. After all, the church service is not the minister's party. It is not his function to welcome the coming or to speed the parting guest. The ushers and the hospitality committee, on behalf of the congregation, should do whatever is necessary in that line. If people want to speak to the minister they should come forward to do so. After prayer and sermon he ought not to be in any mood for the "glad hand" and the mere chatter. Happy is he if the pulpit be so arranged that he can go from it directly into the vestry, either making his exit with a recessional hymn or otherwise. He should be permitted a few moments of quiet, alone, in which to remove his gown, or such other vestments as he may wear. From his point of view the ideal thing would be to slip away without being obliged to talk to people, but he must realize that often there will be people who have something to say to him, members of his own congregation, or visitors. For their sakes he must reappear at the vestry door, or meet them at the foot of the pulpit stairs, for it is their right to speak with him if they will. But it is unnecessary and undignified for him to rush down the main aisle to the door that none may escape his handshake.

The obligations of the visitor.

The stranger should remember that he owes something to the church which he visits. If he expects to be treated

courteously as a guest he must act the part. If the ushers may not bid him stand in yon corner because he is poorly clad, he at least owes it to his hosts and to himself that he should make himself as presentable as his condition permits. If he be placed in a good seat he must behave with decorum, rising with the congregation when they stand, and taking part in the service so far as he is able, in nothing giving offense. He has no just ground to complain of the coldness of the congregation if he does not meet the friendly advances of the hospitality committee halfway, for after all, there is no reason why he should expect to be singled out for especial attention. If he comes repeatedly he should expect to assume his share of financial and other responsibility for the church, so far as he is able, that he may give as well as receive. The story is told of a certain man who became a regular attendant at a "free church," that is, one in which the pews were neither owned nor rented, but were open to the firstcomer at service. He was in due time approached by the treasurer with an invitation to subscribe, but he refused with indignation, saying, "I came here because I understood that this was a free church!" One wonders how he supposed the salaries and the coal bills were paid.

The visitor should remember also that the regular congregation do have certain rights, both legally and morally, because they or their predecessors built the church and pay for its maintenance. They have the right to reserve the church for their exclusive use on special occasions, admitting by ticket only, as on some anniversary, or when they have secured a noted speaker. Some church visitors are little more than "religious tramps," who go about from church to church as fancy dictates or church advertisements draw them. They are often spiritual paupers, receiving much but giving little or nothing. Well-known churches, especially in large cities, are often flooded with such persons at Christmas and Easter, to the discomfort of the regular parishioners. The stranger on such occasions has no just cause for complaint if the seats are reserved for the habitual attendants up to within a few minutes of the time set for the beginning of the service. The remedy is

in his own hands. Let him also become a member of the church of his choice, and by assuming the duties and responsibilities of church membership gain also the full rights and privileges thereof.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ETHICS OF THE MINISTERIAL PROFESSION ¹

The moral standards of the minister.

The ethical standards of the minister do not differ, in principle, from those of any other honorable man in the community. There is not one code of morals for the Christian layman and another for the minister. Any action which is immoral for one is also immoral for the other. But the minister's conduct is affected by three considerations which do not concern the layman—the community rightly expects of him a closer adherence to high standards; certain courses of conduct, not necessarily wrong in themselves, are commonly felt to be unbecoming in a minister; and his relations with his professional brethren present certain problems in ethics or etiquette which do not confront persons in other occupations.

The community expects of the minister a higher standard of conduct than it does of the layman because the minister has openly devoted himself to the ideals of the Christian life, and may properly be required to practice, so far as the grace of God permits, what he preaches. Moral weaknesses which men of the world are prone to consider mere peccadillos, easily excusable, become in the minister grave faults, indicating his unfitness for his profession. His good repute is essential to his ministerial status; an unblemished character is the first requirement for his entrance into and his continuance in the ministry.

Some people base their expectations as to the minister's conduct upon a false theory. They seem to suppose that just because a man has gone into the ministry he is no longer subject to the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Now there are various theories of ordina-

¹ See also the sections on "Advertising the Minister," Chap. XII, pp. 144-148, and on "Confidential Communications," Chap. II, pp. 26-27.

tion, but none of them ascribes to it any such sacramental grace as automatically to free the recipient from all capacity to sin. The plain fact is that the minister is the same man after ordination that he was before, so far as his personal character is concerned, save that he has the added strength which comes from avowed self-devotion to the work of God. He is just as fallible in judgment; just as liable to moral error; just as much in need of the grace of God to uphold him. A minister of my acquaintance happened to overhear a couple of mechanics discussing the ministry as they repaired a motor car. "Well," said one of them, "a minister ought to be a perfect man." The ideal minister is, indeed, the one who most nearly approaches the Christian ideal of perfection, but no one knows better than the minister himself how far beyond him that ideal is. He is continually aware of his weakness and his limitations, of his own sins and shortcomings. As he comes to understand what is expected of him his cry is, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

The prime moral requisite in the minister is integrity—that his life shall be all of one piece. His inner life must be in accord with his outer life, else he is a religious hypocrite, one of the worst things a minister can be. There must be in the minister a "harmony of thought and word and deed . . . so that what we preach with our lips we shall eagerly and unceasingly strive to carry out in our lives."² That moral quality of integrity of life is essential in any religious leader if he is to hold the respect of the world. His outward act must be the genuine expression of his inner life, and both must be of the same pattern as the precepts which he proclaims from the pulpit. He must be like Chaucer's Parson,—

"A bettre preest I trowe there nowher non is
He waytud after no pompe nor reverence,
Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taught, and ferst he folwed it himselve."³

² Bull, "Preaching," p. 74.

³ "Canterbury Tales," Prologue.

This integrity of life will manifest itself in various ways. In financial matters he must be scrupulously careful not only to avoid debt, but to conform to the strictest standards of honesty. Not infrequently some minister shocks business men by getting into a financial tangle through sheer ignorance of the ethics of the business world. The wise minister will refrain from any attempt to make money on the side, because where his treasure is there will his heart be also. He will be careful not to lend his name or endorsement to business ventures. He will not attempt to take care of the money of other people, except that of his immediate family, but will refer them to conscientious and sagacious business advisers. If he has money of his own to invest he will seek such advisers for himself, avoiding those financial adventurers who are ever on the lookout to fleece the unwary by promises of a large return from a small investment. He will not lend money to his own parishioners in larger sums than he can afford to lose, since he is in a position in which he is practically prevented by professional considerations from bringing suit or foreclosing a mortgage to recover his loan if the debtor defers or refuses payment. He will try to gain insight into the ethical problems confronting business men by discussing with his parishioners the questions which they are trying to solve, and he will rejoice to discover the high idealism and practical wisdom of many such men.

In all relations with women the minister must unfailingly maintain that outward demeanor of courtesy and respect which is the genuine expression of an inner chastity of soul. Sexual immorality on the part of an ordained minister is an absolute disqualification for his continuance in the profession, and early irregularities of this sort are a grave obstacle to his entrance into it, though not necessarily an insurmountable one if he has given good ground for confidence in his reformation. Some great figures in the history of Christianity—like St. Augustine of Hippo and John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's—have been men whose early lives were marred by this failing, though they rose from it to later sanctity of life; but modern standards

of conduct are in this respect much higher than those of the fourth or of the seventeenth century.

It is a sign of moral weakness for the minister to permit himself even the relatively harmless familiarities and liberties which some women allow or encourage. To do so is to enter upon a path dangerous to both parties, his own self-respect will be weakened, his reputation becomes liable to damage. Therefore, he should scrupulously conform to the social customs prescribed by good usage in all matters concerning relations with women, even though they seem rather rigid and formal in these free and easy days. It is far wiser for him to seem too reserved and distant with women than too familiar, for it is this kind of familiarity which breeds contempt. He should avoid giving any occasion for gossip or scandal, which, even when baseless, may completely undermine his professional usefulness. To that end he should not call alone upon young married women when their husbands are away from home, nor dance attendance upon the young girls of the community, nor receive alone in his study or office any woman with whom he is unacquainted or about whose character there is the slightest doubt. In large cities, especially, the well-known minister is in danger of some attempt at blackmail on the part of an adventuress who may try to inveigle him into a compromising situation. He should therefore always receive women whom he does not know in some place where other people are within call; his wife or a trustworthy domestic if it be at the parsonage; the sexton or the parish assistant if it be at the church. In the latter place it is prudent to have a hidden button at his desk which will ring a bell to summon others in case of need. The door should be left ajar, or, if closed, the key should be removed so that the door cannot be locked. Needless to say, the character of any woman employed by the church in any capacity should be such as to eliminate any possibility of gossip.

The minister's best protection, however, against any scandal, is his own reputation as a man who has always so borne himself that others will believe no evil of him. Marriage is also a great protection, especially if it be well known that he is completely devoted to his wife. Protes-

tant churches generally, and by a sound instinct, prefer a married to an unmarried minister, unless the latter be a young man who may reasonably be expected soon to take a wife to himself. The record of compulsory celibacy is so dark a page in Christian history that Protestants believe that the moral superiority of a married ministry quite outweighs the accompanying disadvantages in the way of less efficient discipline and organization, and marvel that the Roman Catholic Church has not had the insight to make marriage at least permissible to the secular clergy. Marriage does, indeed, involve the minister in cares and duties which in a measure distract him from his church work, but it also means a much richer experience of life. The right sort of wife will double his usefulness—though the wrong sort may halve it.

A third point at which the integrity of the minister should be manifest is in his sincerity of utterance. He ought to be tactful, but that is not the same as being insincere, for tact consists not in suppressing the truth but in knowing when and how to utter it. In the pulpit and out of it he must speak what he believes to be the truth, without fear or hesitation, but also with all humility and grace, not in dogmatic intolerance or in pride of intellect. He must never profess to believe what he denies in his heart. He must not preach as his own the sermon of another man. The ethical standards in this last matter vary somewhat in different denominations, but in most Protestant churches in this country the charge of plagiarism is regarded as a very serious one. Most congregations prefer to hear a rather poor sermon which is the genuine expression of their minister's thought and feeling than to have him announce that he will read the discourse of another, though it be that of a famous preacher. They will, indeed, tolerate the latter course upon occasion, but they will not forgive him if he passes off that other sermon as his own. Most Protestant ministers in this country would view with strong disapprobation the advice given by a modern English writer, who says,—

“I do not say that you should never preach another man's sermon. In a time of great pressure of work you may be forced

to do so, and to preach another man's sermon is certainly better than to go in utterly unprepared and waste your time, and that of the congregation, with mere vapid talk. Though even so, unless you are prepared to take a volume of printed sermons into the pulpit and read from it, the labor necessary to assimilate another man's sermon and make it sufficiently your own for effective delivery may well be as great as that needed for writing one of your own.

*"Neither do I say that it is necessarily dishonest to preach another man's sermon without acknowledgment. I know some clergy say that if you are preaching a borrowed sermon you should begin with some such introduction as, 'Pressure of work having prevented my preparing a suitable sermon, I propose to-day to give you one by Dr. Liddon,' or whoever it may be. This is a point for each man's conscience. I have known many good men who would have thought it needlessly scrupulous and affected to do so. But if you do borrow anything more than a hint or suggestion, be careful how you borrow. In this, as in all relations of life, a little common sense is a good thing. I once heard a clergyman I knew well deliver Newman's famous sermon on Heb. xii. 14 (the first in Vol. I of 'Parochial and Plain Sermons') to an educated congregation as if it were his own. After the service I went into the vestry and said, 'Do you know what you've done? You have just delivered the most famous sermon in English pulpit literature, as if it were your own.' 'Oh! have I,' he replied quite undisturbed. 'I heard it on my holidays and it seemed rather good, so I just took a few notes.' He might just as well have delivered Hamlet's soliloquy as his own original composition."*⁴

In all these respects the minister must preserve his integrity of soul, so that, whatever his intellectual inadequacy or his failures of accomplishment, men may at least know that they can count upon his character as sound and true.

Conduct unbecoming in a minister.

There are some other matters of conduct, not necessarily involving serious moral weakness, on which the minister is judged by stricter standards than the layman. The minister will prejudice his standing if he indulges in such frivolous forms of amusement as dancing, cards,

⁴Peter Green, "The Town Parson," pp. 129-130. Italics mine.

and, in some communities, the theater, even where they are permitted to the laymen and women of his church. In all these matters he must be governed by the customs of his church, neither unnecessarily giving offense by disregarding public opinion nor slavishly yielding to obscurantist prejudice. But if he follows a course counter to public opinion he should do so on grounds which he can openly defend.

Similarly he will do well to conform to public expectation in the matter of dress. If his church expects him to wear a clerical garb he had better do so. If not, he should so dress as not to cause criticism of his appearance, either by copying the attire of a fashionable man of the world or by going to the other extreme of a defiant unconventionality of dress, or by appearing shabby and unkempt. His clothes may be plain, or even threadbare, but not dirty, ragged, or odorous, and his person should always be clean and pleasant.⁵

In the matter of speech the minister is rightly judged by a high standard. Men who are themselves given to profanity or to broad stories do not want to hear such language from the minister's lips. They will expect him to keep his temper when they lose theirs. They find very irritating a "proud priest," who is self-conscious, arrogant, expectant that the place of distinction will be reserved for him. They are quick to note the self-satisfaction of the minister who has attained to fame as a "popular preacher."

A hundred years ago drink was a vice into which not a few ministers fell, as is still the case in Europe. In America this has been increasingly rare in the last half century, and today has disappeared with national prohibition, since not even the minister who wants to drink alcoholic beverages is willing to violate the law to get them. And however ready some members of the community may be themselves to patronize the "bootlegger," they would hardly tolerate a minister who did so.

The whole matter was summed up long ago in the First

⁵It is worth noting that at least two recent English books on clerical life point out that it is a virtue for the priest to shave every morning on rising!

Epistle to Timothy, wherein it is written of the minister that he must be “without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober minded, orderly, given to hospitality, . . . no brawler, no striker, but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money; one that ruleth well his own house . . .; not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.”⁶

Relations with other ministers.

In his relations with other ministers there are certain standards of conduct which the minister should always observe. In the Roman Church and the Protestant Episcopal Church these matters are covered in the canon law by rules which are the fruit of long experience in dealing with causes of friction among the clergy, but in most Protestant denominations there are no rules, and good customs, not being reduced to written form, are too frequently neglected.

In the first place a minister should recognize all other ministers, whether in his own or in another communion, as members of the same great profession, as colleagues rather than as rivals, entitled to full courtesy and brotherly love. Therefore, the minister should be scrupulous to avoid “sheepstealing.” “Sheepstealing” means trying to get the parishioners in another church to transfer their allegiance to yours. The minister should no more call professionally upon members of another church than a physician should endeavor to entice away another doctor’s patients. The doctor will, of course, give professional aid in an emergency to a person who is not his own patient, but he must withdraw from the case as soon as it can be handed over to the patient’s own physician. So the minister will gladly serve in an emergency, but he must not misuse the opportunity by keeping up the professional relationship after the immediate occasion for it has ceased. He may, for example, conduct a wedding or a funeral in a family belonging to some other church than his own, in the unavoidable absence of their own minister, but he will not

⁶I Tim. iii, 2-4, 8-9. American Revised Version.

use the occasion as an opening for alienating them from their home church. No minister should take a service in another's church without the latter's knowledge and consent, for each minister has the sole right to say who shall or shall not enter his church to conduct service. The only exception to this is when the local minister cannot be reached, either because he has traveled far on a vacation or is too ill for communication. In such instances an outside clergyman may properly conduct such services as cannot suitably be postponed until the local pastor returns or recovers—a funeral—a wedding—a christening when there is occasion for prompt action, but he should afterwards write to the absent minister giving him information about the proceeding. When the local pastor is out of reach the minister should make certain that the persons who desire his services have made application to the proper church officers for the use of the church building, or should himself secure their consent to his performance of the service. He should do this also in the case of such services in a church which for the time being has no settled minister.

Cases will frequently arise in which a minister may be asked, because of family relationship or other personal ties, to take a funeral or a wedding in another minister's church. Before he consents he should ask that the local minister be invited to take some part of the service with him. In such case the local minister takes precedence in his own church, the visitor being there to assist and not to supersede him. Therefore it is the right of the local minister to prescribe the order of service. If there seems to be adequate reason why the visitor should take the service alone, the permission of the local minister must always be first obtained. If he is invited to occupy another minister's pulpit as a supply, he is under obligation to follow the usual order of service as it is given him, and not to alter it or introduce innovations, and he must never make pencil marks in the pulpit Bible, service book, or hymn book. If he cannot remember the exact passages which he wishes to use, let him make the necessary memoranda on a bit of paper.

The relations between the senior minister and his assistants.

Probably the most delicate professional contacts in the ministry are those of men associated together as senior and junior colleagues in a single church. In a Roman Catholic or a Protestant Episcopal parish it is common for the rector, as head of the clergy staff, to have one or more curates working under him. There is, of course, occasional friction between them, but the rector is in a position of recognized authority. The curates are generally young men, who will soon move on to other positions. Furthermore, the clergy in these churches, being accustomed to such relationships, know how to adjust them. The great secret is a careful division of labor, entrusting the assistant with full responsibility for the particular task assigned him and treating him as a partner.

In many Protestant churches the relationship of senior and junior ministers works badly. The trouble comes from the fact that most parishes are run on a one-man basis, and do not seek a colleague for the minister until the latter is advanced in years. He frequently does not know how to make use of the younger man, he may be jealous of him, knowing that the younger man is bound to increase while he must decrease, he is timid about new ways of doing old tasks, suspicious of change, and often, though perhaps unintentionally, inconsiderate in keeping for himself a great part of the preaching, which he enjoys, while expecting the younger man to do the necessary chores for an indefinite number of years. Many an older minister is very inconsiderate in this matter of keeping in his own hands the great bulk of the preaching, allowing the junior partner to preach only on occasions when the congregation is likely to be small, or requesting him to be ready to preach at a moment's notice in case the senior minister does not happen to feel in the mood for preaching when the hour comes. The senior minister, whether he have an assistant or an associate minister, should give his colleague a fair show by leaving him free to work out his own methods in the field assigned him, offering suggestions rather than orders as to procedure; he should be moderate in his expectations and

generous in his appreciation ; he should recognize his junior as a partner in a common enterprise rather than as a subordinate, and should talk over his own plans with him, so that the junior partner will not be put in the humiliating situation of learning from others about important developments in the church program.

The junior associate on his part is liable to be bumptious and impatient, eager to introduce innovations, and, in his turn, inconsiderate of his senior colleague's old-fashioned ways. Friction between the two can be avoided only by mutual sympathy and understanding, but the chances of it will be much diminished if a division of duties be, at the very beginning, clearly defined, and thereafter carefully adhered to, each partner being fully responsible in his own field. Such division should include a fixed apportionment of the preaching appointments, which often can better be made by the governing board of the church than by the senior minister.

Relations with predecessors and successors.

Another occasion of friction and heartburning arises out of the relationship between a minister and his predecessor or successor. A minister who has served a parish for years often finds it very hard to let go, even if he realizes that the time has come for him to do so. It is hard for him to move out of the rectory or parsonage in which he has lived ; he views with doubt or disapproval the changes which his successor is certain to introduce ; and he is liable to become a center of criticism very embarrassing for the new man. Furthermore, if he continues to live in the community his old parishioners are certain to call upon him for many occasional offices—christenings, weddings, and funerals. The minister who resigns in order to take another parish, usually in another city, avoids these causes of friction, save the last mentioned. If he is called back to his old church for a marriage or a funeral professional courtesy requires him to treat his successor as he would any brother minister in another church. If he resigns with the expectation of retiring from the active ministry he should evacuate the parsonage when his resignation takes effect, or as soon there-

after as possible, if illness or other exceptional circumstance makes prompt removal impossible, that the house may be made ready for his successor. Thus to seek a new home is often painful to an old man, but it is no more than just to his successor. If he desires to remain in the community which has long been his home he should at least remove to another part of the town, and it is a good plan for him to absent himself on some prolonged visit while his successor is establishing himself. In any case, even if he retains an honorary connection with the church as pastor emeritus, he should be scrupulously careful to support his successor in every way possible, to keep his hands off the church, to refrain from criticism, and to discourage those of his former parishioners who may run to him with complaints.

The newcomer, on his part, has his obligations to his predecessor. He should not be hasty in introducing changes, he should not criticize the old-fashioned ways or the obvious failings of his predecessor, he should be punctilious in courtesy to him. He must be generous in recognizing the affection in which his parishioners hold the older man, and gladly assent to their calling upon him for occasional services. If the retired minister continues to live in town and it pleases him to take part in the Sunday services, or his parishioners to have him do so, the newcomer should invite his predecessor habitually to take some part in the service of worship and to preach occasionally, instead of leaving him to sit in one of the pews.

Labors of love.

A retired minister, or one occupying some official position which does not include a regular Sunday engagement, is often called upon to render gratuitous service, the so-called "labor of love." He should always be glad to do this for a brother minister who is ill, or who has suffered bereavement, or who for some other good reason is prevented from preaching. The visiting minister should take no fee for such services, though he is entitled to his expenses, and to such entertainment as can be provided.

There are a few ministers who are inclined to take advantage of the good nature of a brother minister known to be free to render such services, and who sometimes sponge upon him when they only want to take a Sunday off, or to prolong their vacation another week. Sometimes a parish will also try to get free preaching by calling upon such a man to supply its pulpit for his expenses, or for less than the usual fee. Such practices are clear signs of lack of self-respect on the part of those who adopt them, and should be firmly discouraged when discovered.

On the other hand a minister so situated should always be ready freely to serve either a brother minister in need or weak parishes which are doing all they can. When he preaches as a supply for a brother minister who is filling another pulpit he is entitled to the fee which the other receives, due allowance being made for the traveling expenses of both. No minister should ever take fees for occasional services, such as christenings, marriages or funerals in the family of another minister, though he may accept his expenses if necessary. Such "labors of love" are but the due and fitting expression of fraternal courtesy.

CHAPTER XV

THE LIBERTY OF THE PULPIT

The right of free speech.

It was stated in Chapter II that the minister is master of his own pulpit, with the right to speak his mind therein, subject only to the limitation that he may not preach contrary to the accepted tenets of his church. This liberty of the pulpit is the most fundamental of all the minister's rights, but of necessity it carries with it certain obligations, and it sometimes gives rise to grave problems. It is, of course, only a particular aspect of the general rights of freedom of speech and freedom of the press, and is very close akin to the academic freedom of the teacher.

The right of free speech is of quite modern origin. It necessarily can exist only in very limited degree under an absolute monarchy or in a church of highly centralized authority. Under such conditions the individual who expresses opinions on any important topic contrary to those of the governing authority will speedily be suppressed, since only thus can absolutism be maintained. The history of civil government, like that of the Christian church, is replete with illustrations of that fact. Even in seventeenth-century England the government undertook to regulate the utterances of the pulpit, as well as of the press. The clergy of the Established Church had been forbidden in Elizabeth's reign to preach sermons of their own handiwork save by special license, and had been limited to reading homilies issued by authority.¹ The practice of preaching from manuscript is said to have arisen in Puritan circles as a defense against charges of seditious preaching, the manu-

¹ Phillimore, "Eccles. Law," 2d ed., Vol. I, p. 786.

script being evidence as to what the preacher actually said. Milton's "Areopagitica" is the classic defense of the liberty of the press. In America the repressive domination of public opinion has largely replaced earlier forms of governmental and ecclesiastical suppression, but during and since the Great War there has been a marked tendency to limit by reactionary legislation both freedom of speech and of teaching. The right to speak in his own mind is, however, one of the fundamental rights of the free man, and encroachments upon it, either by mob sentiment or by legislation, should be strenuously resisted.

Freedom of speech includes the right to criticize the existing social order, the laws upon the statute books, the present form of government, the Constitution itself, which is not a sacrosanct revelation, but a document of human construction, open to improvement, as every amendment thereto implies. The fact that such criticism may often be foolish, or irritating to the majority, is no adequate excuse for silencing it, nor are its authors necessarily unpatriotic or "un-American." There is only one rightful limit to criticism of the state. Neither the preacher nor anyone else may violate the law of the land, nor advocate its violation, without falling under the penalties of the law. If the critic honestly believes that any given law is so iniquitous that he cannot in good conscience obey it then he must be prepared for conscience' sake to suffer the consequences of disobedience, in the hope that his example may help to bring about the law's repeal. But to penalize him merely for the expression of his honest opinion is to violate the sacred and hard-won right of freedom of thought and speech.

For the minister, in particular, the liberty of the pulpit is of the utmost importance. Without it there can be no free inquiry into religion. A muzzled ministry will speedily cease to attract men of independence and character. The influence of the pulpit is based upon its reputation for disinterested loyalty to truth, and can only be maintained where there is both freedom and fearless honesty. No minister who is known to be limited to a paid advocacy of prescribed views can exercise any strong moral

influence. Therefore, the Protestant minister must insist upon his liberty in the pulpit or quit his ministry.

The limits of liberty.

That liberty, however, has its self-imposed restrictions and limitations which must be observed if it is to be exercised with any satisfaction to the preacher or advantage to others. In the first place, it is limited by consideration of the function which the minister is asked to exercise, namely, that of an interpreter of religion. Obviously he is not free to advocate immoral or illegal practices—such as polygamy, or the exposure of unwanted children or the chloroforming of the aged that society may be relieved from the burden of caring for them, since such teachings would be incitements to illegal acts profoundly offensive to the moral and religious standards of his congregation and community, and are not a part of that religion which he is expected to interpret.

In the second place, he is not free to advocate doctrines contrary to the accepted tenets of the church of which he is the minister. By accepting the call to a given church he has indicated his general sympathy with its theological standards and put himself under moral obligations not to destroy its foundations of faith.² He may not, therefore, use his position to press upon his people views which will undermine those standards. He cannot, for example, honorably stand in an Episcopal church as an advocate of Unitarianism, or in a Unitarian church as an advocate of a non-theistic ethical culture, or in a Presbyterian church as advocate of the sacramentarian dogmas of Roman Catholicism. If he holds views thus at variance with the doctrinal standards of his church he should leave it and go where he belongs. If, for reasons of personal interest, or because of a determination to hold his position as a convenient vantage point for spreading his views, he declines to resign, both law and custom warrant the church in dismissing him, after its charges against him are duly proved. Aside, however, from advocacy of immoral or illegal doctrines, or of views opposed to accepted tenets of his church, the church

² See footnote on p. 18.

cannot legally restrict his freedom, dismiss him, lock him out, or penalize him by reducing his salary, on account of anything which he may say in the pulpit.

The rights of the congregation.

No high-minded minister, however, will rest content with a consideration of his legal right alone. He will remember that his congregation also have their rights. The church property is theirs, not his. They pay his salary, in return for which he is under obligation to render definite services to them. When they come to the common worship of God they have a right to a message from him which shall comfort distress, or enlighten ignorance, or arouse the conscience, or move the sluggish will. The preacher ought not to cause distress, or perplex his hearers, or wound their sensibilities, or arouse anger and resentment. He may at times be under the necessity of rebuking them, but he must do it with just discrimination. He must denounce iniquity, but he must remember to love the sinner while hating the sin. He must point out follies of which, perhaps, many of his flock are guilty, but he will always cure folly better by persuasion to wisdom than by satire and invective. In a word, he must always remember that his primary duty is to minister to the moral and spiritual needs of his flock.

Political and social programs.

The minister is more likely, at the present time, to find himself in difficulties when dealing with problems of political and social reform than when he stirs the embers of a dying theological controversy. That, of course, is no new thing. From the days of the Hebrew prophets there has never been a time when the conscientious minister has not been confronted with entrenched social wrongs which it was his duty to oppose. In the two decades between 1840 and 1860 many ministers in the north found themselves holding anti-slavery views quite at variance from those of their congregations. During the Great War some ministers were conscientious pacifists, and many others today hold theories as to government and property which may be shared by only a few of their parishioners. They may hold

these views with intense conviction, believing that vital moral issues are involved, upon which they cannot keep silence. In such case they have the undoubted right to speak their convictions from the pulpit, fully and openly, whether their hearers agree with them or no.

It is generally recognized today that political and economic issues frequently involve ethical problems on a large scale upon which the preacher cannot keep silent. He cannot limit his application of religion to matters of private morality only, but must consider its relation to the whole sweep of our modern industrial civilization.³ But in so doing he must view the world not as a partisan, nor as an advocate of any particular group, but as one "above the struggle" who strives with clear sight and unprejudiced mind to point out the paths which lead to peace and honor, to righteousness and truth. He must remember that the

* "Politics have been separated from Christianity: religious men have supposed that their only business was with the world to come: political men have declared that the present world is governed on entirely different principles than that. But politics for the people cannot be separated from religion. The world is governed by God; this is the rich man's warning, this is the poor man's comfort, this is the real hope in the consideration of all questions, let them be as hard as they may: this is the hope that liberty, fraternity, unity, under some conditions or other, are intended for every people under heaven." F. D. Maurice.

"He must preach on politics, not as the representative of a party but of mankind, and report not the mean counsels of a political economy, which consults for one party or one nation, for one day alone, but declare the sublime oracles of political morality, which looks to the welfare of all parties, all nations, and through all time. . . . I know some men say, 'religion has nothing to do with politics,' . . . They mean morality has nothing to do with politics; that is, in making and administering the laws, no consideration is to be had of charity, truth, justice, or common honesty; . . . that . . . [the minister] should never preach in favor of good laws, or against wicked ones, never set forth the great principles of morality which underlie the welfare of the state, nor point out measures to embody and apply mere principles, and never expose the false principles and wicked measures which would lead the community to ruin." Theodore Parker, "The Function of a Teacher of Religion." See also Martineau, "National Duties and other Sermons and Addresses," especially the sermons on "The Grounds of National Unity" and "The Right of War"; and Channing's discourses on "Slavery" and on "War."

church embraces all classes, men and women who with entire sincerity take very diverse points of view, and that his business is to understand them all, to lead them to understand one another, to interpret to them the law of life in the social order.

He will do well to limit such topics to the special occasions upon which such themes are particularly appropriate, such as national holidays like Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, Forefathers' Day, Lincoln's Birthday, Washington's Birthday, Labor Day, Peace Sunday, or the Sunday before an important election. These occasions will give him ample opportunity for expounding the general principles of civic righteousness and social justice.

It is a good general rule that the preacher should deal with political and economic matters in the pulpit only when they involve clear moral or religious issues, as distinguished from questions of expediency or judgment. His criticism should be constructive rather than merely destructive; he should be accurate in his statements of fact, not basing his discourse upon cheap newspaper gossip; he should avoid all censoriousness, and any imputation of base motives to persons with whom he does not agree, unless he is in possession of such information as would enable him to prove his case in a court of law. He should always bear in mind that he is speaking not as an irresponsible individual but in a representative capacity. He is not a free-lance lecturer, or a soap-box orator, but the spokesman on behalf of a body of worshipers. In the eyes of the world he represents his congregation and is supposed to be speaking their views. Therefore he has no right to talk loosely or foolishly, but only soberly, discreetly, and in the fear of God. Only by so doing can he hold or exert any influence, and avoid doing perhaps irreparable damage to the reputation of his church.

Again he should remember that he is not addressing a debating society but an audience which cannot make immediate reply. It is related that when Louis XIV asked the Prince de Vendôme why he did not attend the court services the latter said, "Sire, I cannot go to hear a man who says whatever he pleases, and to whom no one has the lib-

erty of replying.”⁴ In seventeenth-century England custom, indeed, permitted a member of the congregation to arise at the close of service and openly discuss with the preacher the doctrine presented in the sermon, a practice abundantly illustrated in George Fox’s “Journal.” That custom, however, has died out, and now the only course open to members of the church who have heard from the pulpit views of which they disapprove is to remonstrate privately afterwards with the minister, to put their opposing views in print if his statements have been given newspaper publicity, or to remain away from church. The modern man is likely to take the last course. Whether he does or not it is obviously neither magnanimous nor fair for the minister to use his pulpit as a platform for the habitual promulgation of political or economic theories not shared by many of the congregation. It is his right to make his position quite clear as to any moral issue which may arise, but his right is limited to presenting the issue as fairly as he is able after careful study, free from prejudice and misstatement, stating his conclusions with full allowance for the possibility of error. He must remember that many of his congregation may feel as strongly upon the other side of the question, and he should not assume that those who disagree with him are either fools or knaves. He must not bring into the pulpit half-baked conclusions and snap judgments, based on inadequate or partisan information, on economic or social problems about which even the best-informed may differ widely. What angers a congregation is a dogmatic laying down of the law on points about which the minister has no expert knowledge. Let him remember the words of Cromwell, “I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of Christ, to remember that it is possible that ye may be mistaken.”

Finally he must remember that in any case political and social issues, however important their moral bearings, form only a part of his message. There are great fields of human experience which no social reconstruction will ever affect. The sorrow and loneliness of bereavement, the bitterness of disappointment and failure, remorse for sin and the

⁴ Hoyt, “The Work of Preaching,” p. 235.

reproach of conscience—these are tragedies of life which have nothing to do with economics. Let him make clear the importance of a sound economic and social foundation for morality and religion, let him deal with the great moral issues of his day, but let him never forget that the preacher must also deal constantly with other and higher ranges of human life and experience.

One of the chief reasons why ministers find themselves in difficulties with their congregations is that they do forget this obligation. They themselves become absorbed in some theory of the social order, such as Socialism, or some particular reform, such as the Single tax, and they neglect their ministration to the varied human needs of their people. They harp upon the one string of their own special interest, they twist every text to teach their favorite doctrine, until the subject gets on the nerves of the congregation, which is utterly bored or exasperated by the weekly reiteration of one side of a single issue; just as one's nerves may be set on edge by a child who incessantly strums on a piano the one tune which he knows. Most congregations are willing enough to let the minister speak his mind on subjects upon which they disagree with him, providing he does so only occasionally, and for the rest deals with topics in which they are interested and which give them the nourishment for which they hunger.

The approach to controverted topics.

Some ministers invite trouble by their use of "shock tactics" in dealing with controversial topics. They purposely overstate their case in a startling, aggressive, uncompromising way, both because they think it is more honest to do so, and because, by giving the congregation a shock, they think to secure a measure of attention which would not be given to a discourse in which unwelcome truths were cautiously and tactfully set forth. Now "shock tactics" may sometimes be justified by the well-fed somnolence or the complaisant self-satisfaction of a congregation, but if often repeated they lose their effect and only provoke a violent reaction. Furthermore, "shock tactics" generally indicate that the preacher expects the opposition of his hearers,

whereas the preacher should always assume that his congregation will be ready to accept the truth which he proposes to expound. In the long run, therefore, better results will follow from an irenic presentation of his message. The minister who has really learned the art of preaching can put unwelcome truths in a way which will be persuasive instead of irritating.

The fact of the case is that what makes trouble is not so often what a man says as the way he says it. In most Protestant pulpits a man is free to say almost anything he wants, within the limits of reason and courtesy, if he knows how to say it, and he may do so without being one whit less honest than his blundering brother who is trying to use the blunt instead of the sharp edge of his ax to split his wood. It is not a question of honesty nearly so much as of wisdom and of a sympathetic understanding of the feelings of others. The way to succeed in dealing with controversial topics is to set the issue against the background of some great underlying principle of religion, leaving the people to make their own practical application of the principle to the matter in hand.

The attitude of the parish.

When a fundamental disagreement develops between the minister and his parish, growing out of divergence on political or sociological views, the situation may become so strained that the continuance of the pastoral relationship becomes inexpedient. The parish should, however, be very slow to ask for the minister's resignation, even if many people think the best interests of the church require it. The people should remember that very often such questions are of temporary duration. The divisive issue may presently be settled by legislation or by the growth of public sentiment. In any case such an issue is not of the permanent substance of the gospel. If the parish will patiently live through a period of incompatibility with its minister they may together work out into a happier understanding, just as a married couple may work out of a period of friction and disagreement. Furthermore, where there is division of sentiment within the parish, it is highly inexpe-

dient to give any ground for the charge that the liberty of the pulpit is being abridged. The dissatisfied element must remember that it is always possible that the minister may be right, or at least more nearly in the right than they are. The church should never be put in the position of penalizing the preacher for proclaiming the truth fearlessly and honestly. Mutual forbearance and good will, courtesy and consideration will show the way out of many a strained situation. In this, as in all things, the Christian law of love should be the sacred bond between the minister of the gospel and the parish which he serves—and “where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”



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